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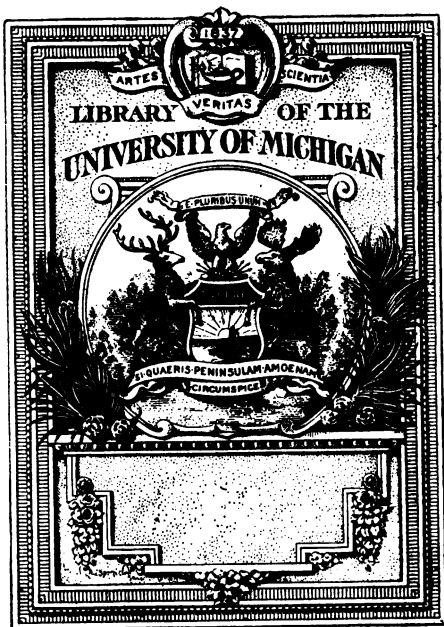
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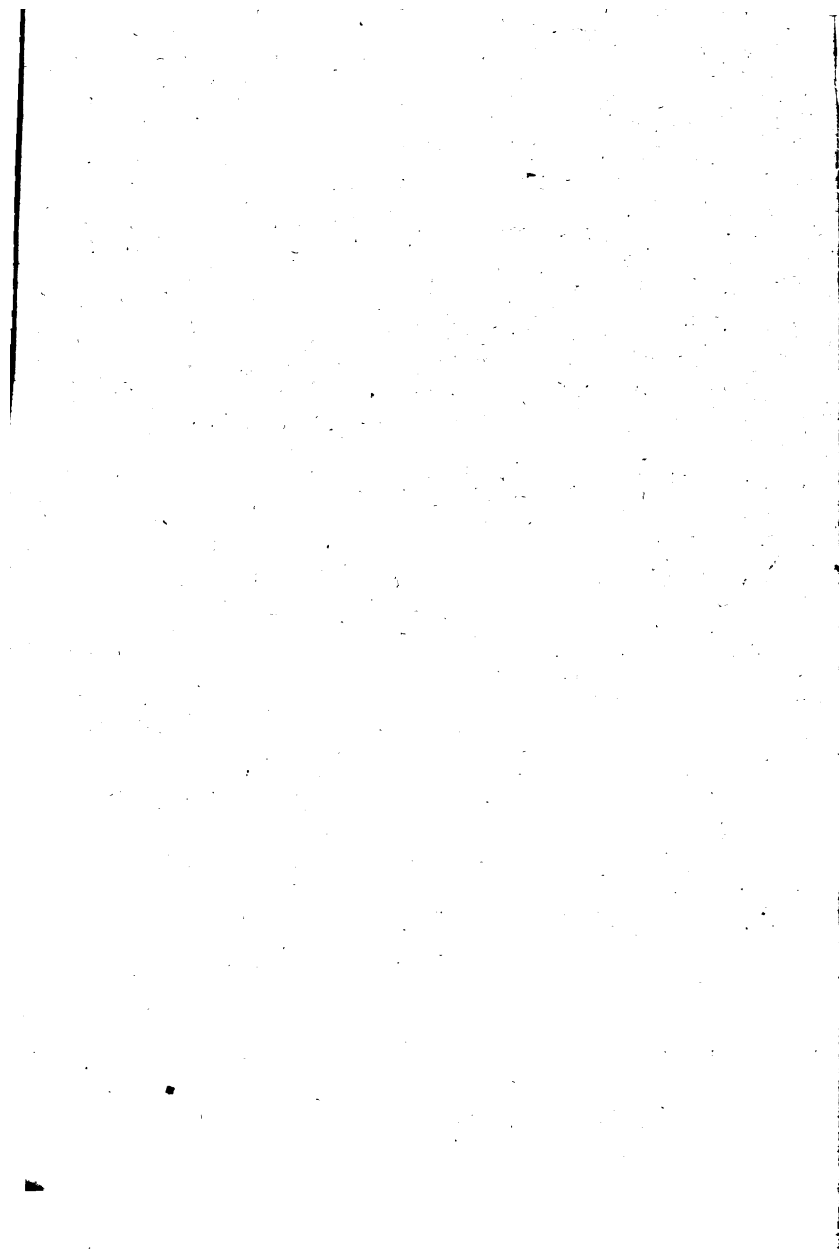
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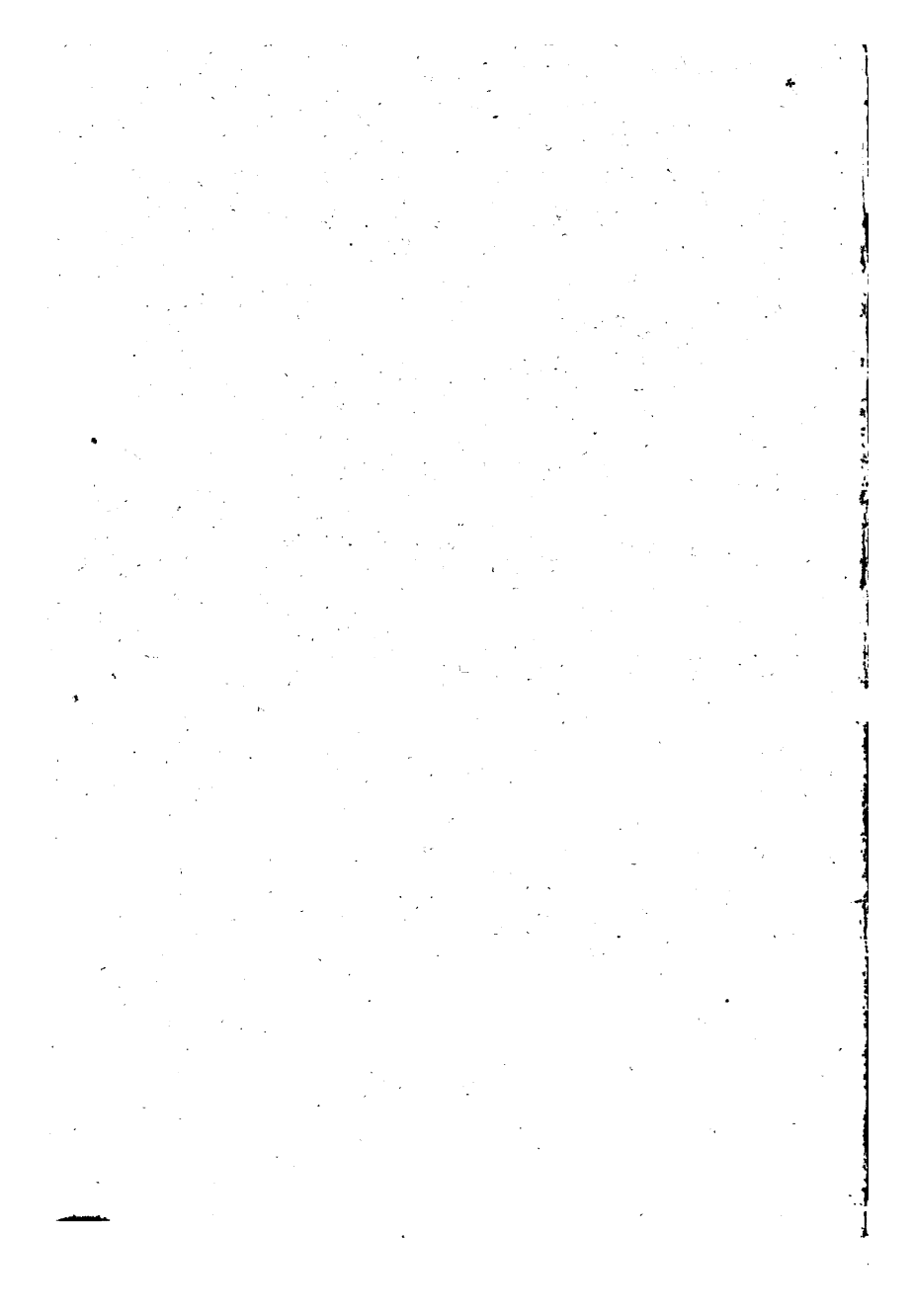
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1893







Readings for Students.

JOAN OF ARC  
THE ENGLISH MAIL COACH

BY  
THOMAS DE QUINCEY

*EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES*

BY  
J. M. HART



NEW YORK  
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## PREFACE.

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THIS volume of selections is not to be regarded as a contribution to the study of English literature in general, or of De Quincey in particular. Its aim is more modest : on the one hand, to interest the student and thereby engage him to make further acquaintance with the author for himself; on the other, to guide him to a better appreciation of prose style.

The very brief statement of the salient points in De Quincey's life and character will be found adequate, I trust, for general needs. Whoever wishes to go more deeply into the subject must consult the works cited at p. v. I take the liberty of doubting whether we shall ever get the *facts* of De Quincey's life more precisely or much more fully than we now have them. His innate shyness, intensified by the opium habit with its attendant vagrancy, has succeeded in enveloping most of the details in an atmosphere of mystery.

The remarks upon De Quincey's style are to be used in connection with Professor Minto's treatise. His treatment of the subject is too condensed to be abridged, and too good to be merely pillaged.

In the matter of annotation I have been as sparing as possible. For explanations of words and phrases the new *International Webster* is the standard of

reference. What is correctly and adequately given there is not uselessly repeated here. In like manner historical and literary allusions that can be traced in the usual books of English history and encyclopedias are passed over. Why should an editor tell his reader what the reader can readily discover with a little effort? But there are allusions which demand special knowledge. These I have tried to elucidate fully enough to bring out the point of De Quincey's wording. Some, I admit, have baffled my best efforts. For instance, I am unable to trace the *fawns* and *stag*, p. 15 : 27, 29, or the female saint in armor, 38 : 10. Perhaps in a subsequent edition I may have better success.

J. M. HART.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY, *August 1*, 1893.

## INTRODUCTION.

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He came, the bard, a little Druid wight  
Of withered aspect ; but his eye was keen,  
With sweetness mixed. In russet brown bedight,  
As is his sister of the copses green,  
He crept along, unpromising of mien.  
Gross he who judges so ! His soul was fair,  
Bright as the children of yon azure sheen.  
True comeliness, which nothing can impair,  
Dwells in the mind : all else is vanity and glare.

—Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*.

[Quoted by Mr. Shadworth Hodgson as an exact prophetic description of De Quincey's appearance.]

### LIFE OF DE QUINCEY.\*

THOMAS DE QUINCEY was born in Manchester, August 15, 1785. He was the fifth child and second son in a family of eight children. His infancy was passed in his father's residence called The Farm, then suburban but now absorbed in the "brick and uproar" of the great city. In 1791 or 1792 the family removed to Greenhay, which is now also within the limits of Manchester. The father, Thomas De Quincey, was a prosperous trader, having extensive transactions with Portugal, the West Indies, and America. He was a man of

\* For further particulars consult : H. A. Page, *Thomas De Quincey, His Life and Writings*, 2 vols., London, 1877 ; second ed., 1879 (Page is a pseudonym for Alexander Hay Japp) ; David Masson, *De Quincey* (in English Men of Letters Series) ; *Encyclopædia Britannica* ; *Dictionary of National Biography*. The latest materials, viz., *Uncollected Writings*, ed. Hogg ; *Posthumous Works*, ed. Japp ; *Memorials*, ed. Japp, are out of reach of the ordinary reader.

literary taste and ability. The mother, a Miss Penson, was—in the discriminating language of her son—"still more highly gifted; for though unpretending to the name and honors of a *literary* woman, I shall presume to call her (what many literary women are not) an *intellectual* woman."

Beyond accumulating a good family library and a comfortable estate, the father did nothing for the development of his son's gifts. During the son's infancy he was absent from Manchester, in Madeira, Lisbon, or the West Indies, partly on business, chiefly in the vain quest of health; his trouble being pulmonary consumption. In 1792 he came home only to die.

From 1792 to 1796 the widow remained with her children at Greenhay. Young Thomas's education was in charge of the Rev. Samuel Hall, curate in Salford, two miles distant from Greenhay. The clergyman grounded his pupil well in Latin and the rudiments of Greek, and also in Biblical lore. The boy's favorite reading at this time was in Johnson, Cowper, and the *Arabian Nights*. But there came a disturbing element in the person of the elder brother, William, a robust lad, twelve years of age, that is, five years older than Thomas. William had been with his father in Lisbon and later at the grammar school of Louth. The two boys were in marked contrast. The elder was physically precocious, strong, and daring; "his genius for mischief amounted to inspiration," to repeat our De Quincey's words. The younger was small and slight, even for his years, timid physically, shy, introspective. For nearly four years Thomas was the victim of a reign of terror, of which he has left the most amusing account in his *Autobiographic Sketches*. In his sixteenth year William, who had shown a talent for drawing, was entered as a pupil in the studio of Loutherbouurg, a distinguished London landscape painter; but soon afterward he died of typhus fever.

In 1796 Mrs. De Quincey sold Greenhay and removed to Bath. Thomas entered the grammar school here, remaining as a pupil over two years, and acquiring a high reputation

for proficiency in the classics. Being accidentally injured, he was removed and sent for a year to a private school at Winkfield. In the summer of 1800 he accepted the invitation of Lord Westport, a boy somewhat younger than himself whose acquaintance he had made at Bath in 1799, to join him in a holiday tour. The two boys, in charge of Lord Westport's tutor, visited Eton and Windsor Castle, (where they were presented to the king and queen), London, Wales, and Ireland. On the canal boat from Dublin to Tullamore they met the Countess of Errol and her sister, the beautiful Miss Blake, "and talked about the English poets for the whole afternoon." The impression made by the Irish beauty upon the intellectually precocious boy was profound; "from this day I was an altered creature, never again relapsing into the careless irreflective mind of childhood."

No less picturesque is the situation a few months later. In October of the same year, on his return from Ireland, he was sent to Laxton, Northamptonshire, to visit Lord and Lady Carbery. The latter, as Miss Watson, a handsome heiress, had been an intimate friend of Mrs. De Quincey. She was at this time twenty-six. She appears to have been kindness itself to the boy ten years her junior, training him in the ways of the elegant world. On the other hand, being a woman of deep religious principles, a follower of the Evangelical School, she got her learned young *protégé* to initiate her in the mysteries of Greek, that she might understand the New Testament in the original. One wonders why no English artist has yet bethought him of painting the stately young matron and her boy teacher holding their amiable morning lesson.

We may linger here over two facts significant for De Quincey's entire future life. With Miss Blake he "talked about the English poets for the whole afternoon." The passage is taken from De Quincey's letter to his mother, dated Westport, Ireland, August 20, 1800. The boy writer was to become, not many years later, the associate of Wordsworth and Coleridge, the expounder of the new school, the

range of information and his powers of conversation, but otherwise he attracted little attention. With the aid of a German acquaintance, Schwarzburg, he mastered that language well enough to make a serious study of its literature and philosophy. It was here, also, that he completed a systematic study of English literature, going back as far as Chaucer. He entered into correspondence with Wordsworth. Coleridge, for whom he had also a profound admiration, had gone to Malta in 1805. Last, but not least, it was at Oxford that De Quincey began the use of opium, that infirmity which is inseparably associated with his name.

The exact date of his leaving Oxford is not known. It was probably in 1807 or 1808, although his name remained on the college books until 1810. He passed with distinction part of the written examination for B. A., but did not offer himself for the oral, and therefore did not receive the degree. He made frequent visits to London, associating there with various men of letters.

In 1806 De Quincey came of age. From this time on for upward of ten years he appears to be in easy circumstances. In 1807 he met Coleridge at Bridgewater and was carried away by his marvelous flow of thought and speech. A few weeks later De Quincey escorted Mrs. Coleridge and her three little children to the Lake country, Coleridge being busy with his arrangements for lectures in London. De Quincey, in his capacity of escort, enjoyed the privilege and happiness of passing two days in Wordsworth's cottage at Grasmere, in the society of the poet himself, his wife, and his sister Dorothy. A few days later he met Southey at Keswick Hall, where Mrs. Coleridge was to remain; she and Mrs. Southey were sisters.

The greater part of 1808 and 1809 De Quincey passed in London. In November, 1809, he took possession of Wordsworth's former cottage, Townsend, Grasmere. For twenty-seven years he was to be its owner. For twenty of these years it was to be his home or, at least, his headquarters. From 1809 to 1816 he remained a bachelor, reveling in his

seclusion and his library (by 1816 he had accumulated five thousand volumes), and yielding more and more to the terrible opium. After Wordsworth and Southey, and Coleridge, who was frequently in the Lake country in 1810, De Quincey's most notable friend was young John Wilson, known subsequently as Professor Wilson of Edinburgh, the "Christopher North" of the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*. De Quincey and North were a singular pair. The former undersized, timid, gentle of voice; the latter, a youthful Hercules, the hero of Oxford athletics and winner of prizes in the classics. Yet they became and ever remained firm friends. It is to be noted that De Quincey, although slight of frame, was always a good walker and had no difficulty in keeping up with Wilson in their numerous all-day fishing excursions. Wilson's home was in Edinburgh, where De Quincey visited him in 1814, making the acquaintance of the younger set of Scotch literary notabilities.

In 1816 De Quincey married Margaret Simpson, the daughter of a Westmoreland "statesman" living near Grasmere. "Statesman," in this sense, has been defined by De Quincey's daughter as a farmer whose family had farmed the same land for generations, the tenure being by special service. Mrs. De Quincey was eighteen at marriage. She was attractive in appearance, amiable in manners, a faithful wife, well educated, and sufficiently informed to appreciate and sympathize with her husband's remarkable gifts. De Quincey's description of the happy days of their early wedded life is in his best vein, and should be read by the side of Carlyle's account of Craigenputtock in his letter to his brother, Dr. Carlyle.\* In the year before and the first year after marriage, De Quincey made strenuous efforts to shake off the opium habit. But he speedily relapsed, until in 1819 he was at his worst. The maximum dose, if we may trust his statement, was twelve thousand drops of laudanum, or about ten wineglassfuls. This is scarcely credible. In

\* November 26, 1828. In *Letters of Thomas Carlyle*, ed. C. E. Norton, 1889, p. 129.

1819 he made a second and fairly successful effort to reform. His resources, through carelessness and unfortunate investments, had become seriously impaired, and he was confronted with the possibility of poverty. He emerged from the crisis with a shattered frame and nerves unstrung, but at all events the demon, if not actually slain, had been subdued. Thenceforth De Quincey was only a moderate opium taker, with an occasional excess.

In 1819 his friends procured for him the editorship of the *Westmoreland Gazette*, started in 1818 as the local organ of the Tory party. He held the office for a little over a year. His editorship can scarcely be called successful, for De Quincey was not the man to embody practical views upon practical current matters. But it had one all-important result: it habituated De Quincey to seeing himself in print, it gave him "a liking for the sight of printer's proofs." Up to this time, although the most indefatigable reader of other men's writings, he himself had written nothing. He had been a consumer, not a producer. From this time on he was to be not only one of the most conspicuous writers, but even one of the most prolific.

De Quincey's first appearance as a magazine writer was in the *London Magazine*, then at the height of its fame. Among its contributors were Lamb ("Elia"), Hazlitt, Allan Cunningham, Procter ("Barry Cornwall"), and Thomas Hood. In the *London Magazine* for September, 1821, appeared the first part, in October the second part of the *Confessions of an Opium Eater*. About a year later the publishers of the magazine brought out a separate volume of *Confessions*, including a so-called third part.

In 1823 and 1824 articles from De Quincey's pen came fast. Especially noteworthy are *Walking Stewart*, *On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth*, *Analects from Jean Paul Richter*, *Goethe*. The latter article was a sharp attack both on Goethe himself and on Carlyle as translator of his *Wilhelm Meister*.



In November, 1826, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, appeared *Lessing's Laocoön, Translated with Notes*; in February, 1827, the *Last Days of Immanuel Kant* and *On Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts*.

From 1821 to 1830 De Quincey had still nominally his home at Grasmere. But much if not most of the time he was either in London or in Edinburgh, leading the life of a city recluse, seeing only occasionally an intimate friend like Lamb, or Charles Knight, or Wilson. In 1830 he removed himself and family to Edinburgh. Henceforth the great English writer is permanently identified with the Scotch capital. But although in Edinburgh he was not of it; he did not form an appreciable element of its society, as did Wilson, Jeffrey, Sir William Hamilton, Brewster, and so many others. The shyness, the aloofness, born in him and confirmed by his terrible youthful vagrancy in London in 1803, grew from year to year until in the latter part of his life only his most intimate friends could get an interview without recourse to some stratagem. His habits of life grew more and more eccentric. Although exact data are wanting, we know that he frequently, if not usually, had lodgings away from his family, sometimes even two or three different lodgings of his own. Like the Arab, he was incessantly shifting his tent. Yet he was sincerely attached to his family, and was beloved by them in turn. He took much pride in educating his children, and was the gentlest and most indulgent of fathers. Indeed, aloofness and gentleness seem to have been the dominant traits in De Quincey's character. In 1833 his youngest son died; in 1835 his eldest, William, in his eighteenth year, a youth of great promise, or, in the father's own words—"my firstborn child, the crown and glory of my life." And in 1837 died his wife. Delicate health, the care of a large family, and the still greater care of a man of genius, loving and attractive in many ways, it is true, but a hopeless burden of responsibility, were too much for one not of the toughest fiber. The recollection of her survives as of a gracious and beautiful woman. Her

practical good sense and sweet temper she fortunately transmitted to her children.

After two or three years of uncertainty, the children took the management of affairs in their own hands. The eldest daughter, Margaret, and the eldest son, Horace, formed the plan of removing with the others to Lasswade, seven miles out of Edinburgh, leaving the father to come and go at will. The plan appears to have worked well. For nine years Lasswade was the De Quincey home, while the father occupied one set of lodgings after another in town, visiting his children frequently but fitfully. One of his practices is too amusing and characteristic to be omitted, even in the briefest narrative. He accumulated books and papers so rapidly as to make his room uninhabitable. When thus "snowed up," he would move into fresh quarters, perhaps in another house, to begin the process all over again, but retaining and paying rent for the former room. It is known that in this way he was at one time chargeable for at least four separate sets of lodgings at once. When, in 1850, or somewhat later, De Quincey undertook to bring out a collected edition of his works, the chief labor of his publisher, Mr. Hogg, a shrewd and persevering man of business, was to work out, almost after the manner of a detective, the traces of De Quincey's endless haunts, and gather together precious manuscripts scattered over Edinburgh, and even as far as Glasgow. The following is quoted from Masson's *Life*, chapter x; it reveals the man: "Once, in a hotel in High Street, into which he [Mr. Hogg] had taken De Quincey for refuge and a basin of soup during a thunder shower, the waiter, after looking at De Quincey, said: 'I think, sir, I have a bundle of papers which you left here some time ago,' and sure enough, a bundle was produced which De Quincey had left there about a year before. Another time, having gone to Glasgow once more on a visit to Professor Lushington, and having taken two tea chests of papers with him, he had been obliged, by some refractoriness on the part of the porter, to leave them at a bookseller's shop on their way to the professor's

house. This he remembered perfectly; but, as he taken no note of the bookseller, or the number of the shop, or even of the name of the street, Mr. Hogg found him quite rueful on the subject after his return to Edinburgh. A letter to a friend and a round of inquiries among the Glasgow booksellers made all right, and Mr. Hogg had the pleasure of pointing out to him the two recovered boxes as they lay in his office."

One of his daughters has given us this glimpse of the father at Lasswade of an evening: "The newspaper was brought out, and he, telling in his own delightful way, rather than reading the news, would, on questions from this one or that of the party, often including young friends of his children, neighbors, or visitors from distant places, illuminate the subject with such a wealth of memories, of old stories, of past or present experiences, of humor, of suggestion, even of prophecy, as by its very wealth makes it impossible to give any taste of it." And she adds this touch: "He was not a reassuring man for nervous people to live with, as those nights were exceptions on which he did not set something on fire, the commonest incident being for some one to look up from book or work to say casually, '*Papa, your hair is on fire*;' of which a calm '*Is it, my love?*' and a hand rubbing out the blaze was all the notice taken" (*Mason*, chapter ix).

During the years from 1840 to 1849 De Quincey's contributions to *Blackwood's Magazine* and to *Tait's* were numerous. Noteworthy are *Plato's Republic*, *Homer and the Homerideæ*, *Suspiria de Profundis*, *The English Mail Coach*, *Wordsworth's Poetry*, *Joan of Arc*. In 1844 appeared also his *Logic of Political Economy* in book form.

With the year 1849 De Quincey's productivity was practically at an end. He wrote, it is true, an occasional short paper, but in the main his remnant of life and activity was consumed in the not easy task of bringing his scattered productions into one collected edition. The credit of planning this edition, and keeping the author's flagging energy up to the task, is due to the Edinburgh publisher, Mr. Hogg.

The first volume appeared in 1853, the fourteenth and last in 1860, the year after De Quincey's death. Parallel with the Edinburgh edition appeared the Ticknor & Fields collection, 1851-55, originally in eleven volumes, subsequently expanded to twenty. This is still the one most familiar to Americans. It contained several articles omitted from or condensed in the Edinburgh; on the other hand the Edinburgh had the advantage of the author's revision and annotation. In 1861 the Edinburgh became the property of the Blacks, who reissued it in 1862, with a fifteenth volume, containing the biographies written by De Quincey for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The new Edinburgh, published by the Blacks in 1889-90, in fourteen volumes, is greatly superior to all its predecessors. It has been carefully revised by the well-known De Quincey scholar, Professor Masson, who has supplied much additional matter, partly from De Quincey, partly from his own researches. Although not quite an *édition définitive*, it meets all practical wants. The arrangement of contents has been improved, and it has the great merit of being cheap and even procurable in separate volumes.

In 1853 De Quincey's eldest daughter, Margaret, was married to Mr. Robert Craig, and removed with her husband to Ireland. In 1855 the second daughter, Florence, was married to Colonel Baird Smith, of the East India Engineers. In 1857 De Quincey, then in his seventy-third year, visited his daughter and her two little children in Ireland. The last great public event to arouse his interest was the East Indian mutiny of 1857-58, in the suppression of which his son, Paul Frederick, and his son-in-law, Colonel Smith, had a share.

On December 8, 1859, he died in Edinburgh, attended by his unmarried daughter Emily and by Mrs. Craig, hastily summoned from Ireland.

#### POSITION IN LITERATURE.

De Quincey is the English essayist by eminence. He produced only two books: *Logic of Political Economy*, 1844,

and *Klosterheim, or the Masque*, 1832, both reprinted in the new Edinburgh edition. In this respect he differs from his great contemporaries, Macaulay and Carlyle.

The first feature to strike the reader of De Quincey is his immense range of subject and the multifariousness of his knowledge. Even the best read student finds it difficult to keep pace with his divagations. This accumulation of literary material is not mere pedantry; it is the result of unusual inquisitiveness and a tenacious memory, quickened by keen observation of life and character. Like Macaulay, whose memory was still more prodigious, De Quincey trusted too much to his recollections of what he had read; he did not always take the pains to verify by consulting authorities. One or two instances of inaccuracy are pointed out in the Notes to this volume. In his biography of Shakspeare he writes: "he [Milton] speaks of him [Shakspeare] in his *Il Penseroso* as the tutelary genius of the English stage." The lines in question are in *L'Allegro*, and do not bear out the assertion. But such blemishes are rare.

Furthermore, De Quincey was endowed with an independent and subtle intellect. To repeat Goldsmith's remark upon Burke, "he winds into a subject like a serpent." He does not rush at it dogmatically, like Johnson, or Carlyle, or Macaulay, but reaches the heart of the question only upon slowly converging lines. An impatient reader is tempted at first to regard him as prolix or digressive, until, reaching the conclusion, he discovers that the whole is a series of inevitable logical steps. The papers in the present volume, being mainly narrative and descriptive, do not illustrate De Quincey's method as forcibly as do his analytic and argumentative writings.

The dominant trait in his character is æsthetic intellectuality. He is not a man of practical life, like Macaulay; neither is he a prophet-teacher with a message, like Carlyle. He views the issues of life as questions to be studied by the intellect. But in him the intellect has for its constant companions imagination and sympathy. On the one hand, his

imagination, like Burke's, transfigures the framework of his thought with a radiant atmosphere of figurative illustration. Simile, Comparison, Metaphor, Personification, Apostrophe, the whole domain of figurative speech, is at his beck; and the figures seem to come spontaneously, instinctively; the writer seems to be without any conscious rhetorical intent. Yet this is only the writer's art concealing itself; of all English prose writers De Quincey is the one who has blended most skillfully practice and theory. The impression made upon the reader's mind is vivid, the truth is not merely stated but enforced. On the other hand, De Quincey's sympathy is no less active. He identifies himself with all that is noble in life. Especially does he interest himself in those whom the world has despised, neglected, or misunderstood. He makes it his business to recall to our notice men and women whom otherwise we might forget. And this sympathy is so intense as to raise him at times to the highest pathos. A notable instance is the paper on *Joan of Arc*, unsurpassed in our prose literature.

From the pathetic to the sublime is but a step. Yet it is a step rarely taken. How De Quincey took it may be learned, partially at least, from the *Dream-Fugue*, in the present volume. Better still, from the *Confessions* and the *Suspiria de Profundis*. Here De Quincey, after the manner of the Hebrew prophets, leaving behind him the mere facts of existence, or using them only as a text, gives himself up to musing on the eternal problems of life and death, human character and the soul, the finite in contrast with the infinite.

Although he is not among our professed humorists, there is a vein of humor running through all his work except that of the order sublime. Even the pathos of *Joan* is tinged with it. His humor is not of the whole-souled kind that takes delight in the pure humanity underlying vulgar oddities; it has no sympathy with such characters as Wilkins Micawber and Captain Costigan, perhaps not even with Pistol and Mistress Quickly. But De Quincey had

a keen eye for the incongruous, for the discrepancy between assertion and fact, promise and performance. Often this perception takes the form of good-natured banter. See his attacks upon Michelet and the French in general, in the *Joan*. At times his humor assumes the form of irony. See the passage on Miss Haumette, on the woman and donkey, the stocking-darning, and junior lords of the admiralty, pp. 17, 18. At other times it assumes the form of jesting with the terrible, *e. g.*, in *Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts*. Possibly De Quincey's egotism, his obtrusion of his personality in writings not professedly autobiographical, may also be attributed to his sense of humor; he heightens the effect by the contrast between his personal insignificance and the significance of the situation. This is evident throughout the *Mail Coach*. Even his frequent mention of *kicking* as a favorite mode of punishment, see 36: 17, 49: 25, 53: 17, 90: 16, must be self-irony, conscious or unconscious. One can scarcely imagine a man of De Quincey's physique and gentle refinement having any knowledge of the operation.

Not the least of De Quincey's services to critical study is his strenuous enforcement of the distinction, due originally to Wordsworth, between the literature of *knowledge* and the literature of *power*. The one speaks merely to the understanding, to our desire of knowledge, and its utterances are necessarily superseded by later discoveries and wider generalization. The other speaks to the higher understanding, the reason (in Coleridge's sense), through the affections of pleasure and sympathy, and its utterances can never be superseded. De Quincey illustrates the difference by comparing Newton's *Principia*, the power of which "has transmigrated into other forms," with the *Iliad*, the *Prometheus* of Æschylus, *King Lear*, *Paradise Lost*, which "never *can* transmigrate into new incarnations." The distinction is just and helpful. Yet Professor Masson is right in suggesting that it is not free from danger. Besides, we should consider that *scientific style*, so to speak, is only

in its infancy. The great discoverers and investigators of modern times either wrote in a dead language, Latin, or, if they made use of their mother tongue, they gave no heed to the art of expression. But in our own day the consciousness is gaining ground that science and art are not at variance, but may be mutually helpful; that the explorer of the secrets of nature need not ignore the language of man's heart and man's imagination. The artistic treatment that has charmed the present generation in the writings of Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall, will survive after their scientific principles have "transmigrated." A thoroughly well-written book, whether of fiction or of fact, will always find readers. All the more is it to be deplored, therefore, that our present schools of science should ignore this side of training. They impart a wonderful deal of knowledge, they graduate pupils in a full panoply of facts and formulas. But these pupils are insensible to the beauty that inheres in all truth; they have no appreciation of form, no gift of communicating themselves. They need to be introduced to the literature of power. And perhaps De Quincey himself may best serve their need. Is he not the living contradiction of his own postulate that there is a wall of separation between knowledge and power? He is not a writer of pure imagination; does not belong in the category of Homer, Æschylus, Shakspeare, Milton. His basis is always that of fact, historical or biographical fact; his imaginings are merely the adjuncts of this fact. Yet, by virtue of the illumining power of his treatment, he converts the dry facts into spiritual truth. He is our great teacher of form, perhaps our greatest teacher in prose. Compared with him, Macaulay is unimaginative. Carlyle has imagination enough, and in certain features of style is even superior to De Quincey. But his imagination is not only bizarre at times, and confusing to the reader, but—a much more dangerous fault—is often the mere handmaid of arrogant and illogical doctrines. His notorious article on Scott, for instance, is a masterpiece of constructive imagination, inculcating with preternatural energy what is at bottom a



falsehood. De Quincey's imaginings, if not in every single instance consonant with the pure white light of reason, at least never willfully pervert the truth.

## STYLE.

The most systematic treatment is to be found in the late Professor Minto's *Manual of English Prose Literature*. The following remarks, although influenced by Minto, are independent, being prepared with regard to the present texts.

*Grammar.* De Quincey seems to favor the vague relative pronoun *that* at the expense of the more precise *who* or *which*. See "the poor shepherd girl . . . *that*" p. 1: 3; "I, *that* have leisure to read," 4: 31; "in those *that* . . . were always teasing her," 10: 24; "Charlotte Corday, *that* in the bloom of youth, *that* with the loveliest of persons," 33: 27; "English soldier—*who* had sworn to throw a fagot on her scaffold . . . *that* did so, *that* fulfilled his vow," 41: 23. The change here from *who* to *that* is certainly not elegant. In the sentence: "But by her side . . . won at last," 117: 17-23, the relative pronoun is *that*; the *which*, 117: 21, is not a pronoun, but a pronominal adjective, and the conjunction *that*, 117: 22, is superfluous. "But at intervals *that* sang together," 114: 1, is unusual, for "but who at intervals sang together."

A neat example of the old ethical dative is "Unhorse me, knock me," 100: 15.

The *of* in the phrase "in comparison *of* ourselves," 98: 32, sounds old-fashioned; is it English in distinction from American? In the phrases: "Coming forward *on* the eye," 13: 21; "*upon* a sound from afar," 110: 23; "*upon* the least shadow of failure," 103: 2, the peculiar use of the preposition is very happy; also in "armed *into* courage," 15: 10; "relents *into* reasons," 1: 13. Unusual is "*on* different motives," 20: 15, for "from" or "with."

With reference to the recent discussion of *nor-or* and the accompanying verb, it may be worth while to note: "Not

a hoof *nor* a wheel *was* to be heard," 96:6; "could not distinguish the tendencies *nor* decipher the forms," 13:12.

"Some time or other," 4:30; "the three first," 122:5, are conversational turns rather than literary.

The plural *glooms*, 13:10, 42:26, is unusual. It occurs in Savage's *Wanderer*, but that is scarcely an authority.

As an Englishman of the English, De Quincey is scrupulous in the use of *shall* and *will*. Attention is called to the delicate discrimination in: "She it is, I engage, that *shall* take my lord's brief. She it is, bishop, that *would* plead for you; yes, bishop, *SHE*—when heaven and earth are silent," 45:21. Also to the expression: "Who have thrown themselves boldly on the judgment of a far posterity, that *should* have had time to review, to ponder, to compare," 7:1.

Professor Masson, ch. xi, end, criticises De Quincey's use of such participial forms as *supposing*. A like expression is "*excepting* one man," 25:12, where grammatical logic demands "one man excepted." But in America this use of "excepting," etc., is almost universal.

In the arrangement of words and phrases De Quincey is usually faultless. However involved the sentence may be, each part is in its proper place. But occasionally one may detect a slight aberration. Thus, "as many a better man than D'Arc does," 18:15, refers grammatically to *making* holes in stockings, whereas it is intended to refer to *mending* them. Again, 94:7, "this infirmity" does not refer to "thou snoorest," but to "the vicious habit of sleeping," a few lines above. As it now stands, "this infirmity" seems to suggest that the Pagan Pantheon was given to snoring; this was assuredly not in the author's mind.

"She never sang *together with* the songs," etc., 2:20, and "*For all*, except this comfort," etc., 43:23, are not perfectly clear.

*Vocabulary.* This is one of the richest in our literature; in fact we may doubt if any writer in English had a greater variety of words at his command. This profusion is partly the result of De Quincey's extensive reading; partly the

expression of his determination to be perfectly *exact*. He does not hesitate to go to any length, whether of erudition or of colloquialism, in his quest of a word that shall convey his meaning, no more, no less. Herein he differs from Macaulay, who rarely oversteps the conventional, and often contents himself with stating his thought halfway. On the other hand De Quincey is less barbaric than Carlyle; he rarely coins a word outright, like Carlyle's famous "gigmanity," or "Big-endian and Little-endian." His coinages are more scholarly; see *sigh-born*, 96:16, with the note.

For samples of De Quincey's selection of homely but very technical words, see *burgoo*, 38:27; *quartering*, 99:15, 58:15; *turrets*, 68:4.

For learned technical terms see *radix of the series*, 98:19; *confluent*, applied to roads, 93:21; *decussated*, 9:21; *determinate and ample separation*, 56:28; *allocating*, 55:9; *equable transparency*, 97:16; *diphrelatic*, 91:27. De Quincey's remark upon this word, quoted in the note, gives the key to his method.

Frequently De Quincey uses a word in its earlier etymological sense; *e. g.*, "saintly *passion*" (=suffering), 23:32; "*piety* to France" (=filial affection), 10:26; "false *luxurious* confidence" (=unjustifiable, wrong), 96:7.

"The right hemisphere for a peep at us," 33:14, is an apt illustration of the author's scientific accuracy and quaintness combined.

In "lawny thickets," 65:8, "reedy gig," 101:19, "cany carriage," 106:1, De Quincey resorts to an adjective formation which cannot be commended, and which gives to the diction a touch almost of effeminacy.

His use of figurative language, especially for illustration, is very lavish. Thus, his comparison of the horse to a leopard, 61:8, 75:9; "the *tiger* roar of his [Death's] voice," 106:29; the "crane-neck" movement of the carters, 58:15. Of a much higher rhetorical order are "drank from the cup of rest," 2:19, "bore each an orchestral part in this universal lull," 97:11, in which rest and silence, mere negations, are

treated as positive entities. The entire sentence, "All these writers . . . nothing else to challenge," 4 : 22-30, is a mass of figure, yet without being "mixed." Whereas "wedge of native resources . . . rekindling national pride . . . planting the dauphin on his feet," 24 : 22, is decidedly "mixed."

The paragraph beginning "On the Wednesday," 34 : 13, is a specimen of skill in passing from high pitch to sober statement; it is abrupt but not awkward.

— The sentence, "The golden tubes of the organ . . . heart-shattering music," 117 : 26-30, at once so graphic and so mystic in its figurative expression, is one of many indications of De Quincey's love of music. In truth the whole *Dream-Fugue* is a combination, unsurpassed except in certain *In Memoriam* passages, of mystic vision and mystic harmony.

— De Quincey was no follower of the school that would prescribe Latin-French terms and substitute for them homely Anglo-Saxon. In his eyes every word, of whatever origin, once admitted and sanctioned by use, was not only good but even indispensable. He needed all sorts and conditions of words to express his endless shades of meaning. Not the *provenience* of a word was his criterion, but its *function*. Yet no writer has known better than he that Latin-French and Anglo-Saxon have different functions, or known better how to combine them. The reader should note carefully the passage, "She might not prefigure . . . *that* she heard forever," 3 : 21-31, how long and short, foreign and native, commingle, how the words expressive of condition and mental state are foreign, the words of action native.

Above all, De Quincey's style is continuous; to use a favorite term with him and Coleridge, *sequacious*. By this is not meant a *sustained* style, one that never lets itself down below a certain high level; for every reader of De Quincey knows, and the *Joan* gives abundant evidence, that he often drops nimbly enough from the pathetic to the ridiculous. A sequacious style is one that unfolds the writer's thought step by step, in due logical order, without haste and without

rest, without gaps and unexplained jumps; in this style no one thought or feeling is uttered for its own sake alone, but everything is said with regard to the sequence, and the watchful eye of the master is upon the whole and upon every part. The master does not let himself be carried away by his own creations; he restrains himself, he obeys the laws of art, says what must be said and suppresses everything that is not in keeping with the evolution of his thought. Certainly the *Joan* is a good example of the sequacious; there is scarcely a word, certainly not a phrase, which is not there because the author, after careful deliberation, judges that it ought to be there, as an organic part of his art-work. The humorous touches heighten the effect; the apparent digressions are parts of the general theme as the author conceives it.

Objection has often been made to De Quincey's lavish use of slang. See his collection of terms from the prize ring in the paper on Sir William Hamilton, v. 325, or the passage on Longinus, quoted by Minto, *Manual of Prose*, p. 71. Akin to slang is his tone of affected patronage of the person whom he is discussing. Thus, 36:21, 24, 31, he dubs Thomas à Kempis "Tom." Going to the opposite extreme of affected politeness, 37:27, he speaks of him as "Mr." à Kempis. The Jewish historian, in another paper, he claps on the back familiarly as "Joe." From the purist's point of view these mannerisms are of course indefensible. But to the psychologist they are genuine revelations of the writer. De Quincey's mind was acute, refined, perhaps over-refined, over-loaded with life's burdens. It must have some vent, and this was the vent. It was his way of being a man with men, of echoing Faust's ejaculation: *Hier bin ich Mensch, hier darf ich's sein.*

Of his slang it may be trenchantly said that it is *harmless*, because it does not lend itself to imitation. Coming from a man of learning, it can be understood and appreciated only by a reader who is alive to the graces of learning. Being neither coarse nor vulgar, it has no attrac-

tions for the coarse and vulgar ; it is in the strictest sense esoteric. And being individual and characteristic, so characteristic indeed that we cannot imagine De Quincey without it, there is no temptation for any other writer to imitate it ; one might as soon venture to imitate the idiosyncracies of Carlyle. We should miss something from the make-up of our literary prose, were we deprived of this elfish "chaff."

# THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

## JOAN OF ARC.\*

WHAT is to be thought of *her*? What is to be thought of the poor shepherd girl from the hills and forests of Lorraine, that—like the Hebrew shepherd boy from the hills and forests of Judea—rose suddenly out of the quiet, out of the safety, out of the

\* "*Arc.*"—Modern France, that should know a great deal better than myself, insists that the name is not D'Arc—*i. e.*, of Arc—but *Darc*. Now it happens sometimes that, if a person whose position guarantees his access to the best information will  
10 content himself with gloomy dogmatism, striking the table with his fist, and saying in a terrific voice, "It *is* so, and there's an end of it," one bows deferentially, and submits. But, if, unhappily for himself, won by this docility, he relents too amiably into reasons and arguments, probably one raises an insurrection  
15 against him that may never be crushed; for in the fields of logic one can skirmish, perhaps, as well as he. Had he confined himself to dogmatism, he would have intrenched his position in darkness, and have hidden his own vulnerable points. But coming down to base reasons he lets in light, and one sees where to plant  
20 the blows. Now, the worshipful reason of modern France for disturbing the old received spelling is that Jean Hordal, a descendant of La Pucelle's brother, spelled the name *Darc* in 1612. But what of that? It is notorious that what small matter of spelling Providence had thought fit to disburse among man in the  
25 seventeenth century was all monopolized by printers; now, M. Hordal was *not* a printer.

religious inspiration, rooted in deep pastoral solitudes, to a station in the van of armies, and to the more perilous station at the right hand of kings? The Hebrew boy inaugurated his patriotic mission by an *act*, by a victorious *act*, such as no man could deny. 5 But so did the girl of Lorraine, if we read her story as it was read by those who saw her nearest. Adverse armies bore witness to the boy as no pretender; but so they did to the gentle girl. Judged by the voices of all who saw them *from a station of good will*, both 10 were found true and loyal to any promises involved in their first acts. Enemies it was that made the difference between their subsequent fortunes. The boy rose to a splendor and a noonday prosperity, both personal and public, that rang through the rec- 15 ords of his people, and became a byword among his posterity for a thousand years, until the scepter was departing from Judah. The poor forsaken girl, on the contrary, drank not herself from that cup of rest which she had secured for France. She never sang 20 together with the songs that rose in her native Domrémy as echoes to the departing steps of invaders. She mingled not in the festal dances at Vaucouleurs which celebrated in rapture the redemption of France. No! for her voice was then silent; no! for her feet 25 were dust. Pure, innocent, noble-hearted girl! whom, from earliest youth, ever I believed in as full of truth and self-sacrifice, this was among the strongest pledges for *thy* truth, that never once—no, not for a moment of weakness—didst thou revel in the vision of coronets 30 and honor from man. Coronets for thee! Oh, no! Honors, if they come when all is over, are for those



that share thy blood.\* Daughter of Domrémy, when the gratitude of thy king shall awaken, thou wilt be sleeping the sleep of the dead. Call her, king of France, but she will not hear thee. Cite her by the  
5 apparitors to come and receive a robe of honor, but she will be found *en contumace*. When the thunders of universal France, as even yet may happen, shall proclaim the grandeur of the poor shepherd girl that gave up all for her country, thy ear, young shepherd  
10 girl, will have been deaf for five centuries. To suffer and to do, that was thy portion in this life; that was thy destiny; and not for a moment was it hidden from thyself. Life, thou saidst, is short; and the sleep which is in the grave is long; let me use that life, so transitory,  
15 for the glory of those heavenly dreams destined to comfort the sleep which is so long! This pure creature—pure from every suspicion of even a visionary self-interest, even as she was pure in senses more obvious—never once did this holy child, as regarded herself,  
20 relax from her belief in the darkness that was traveling to meet her. She might not prefigure the very manner of her death; she saw not in vision, perhaps, the aerial altitude of the fiery scaffold, the spectators without end, on every road, pouring into Rouen as to  
25 a coronation, the surging smoke, the volleying flames, the hostile faces all around, the pitying eye that lurked but here and there, until nature and imperishable truth broke loose from artificial restraints—these might not be apparent through the mists of the hurrying future. But the voice that called her to death,  
30 *that* she heard forever.

\* "*Those that share thy blood.*"—A collateral relative of Joanna's was subsequently ennobled by the title of *Du Lys*.

Great was the throne of France even in those days, and great was he that sat upon it ; but well Joanna knew that not the throne, nor he that sat upon it, was for *her*; but, on the contrary, that she was for *them*; not she by them, but they by her, should rise from the dust. Gorgeous were the lilies of France, and for centuries had the privilege to spread their beauty over land and sea, until, in another century, the wrath of God and man combined to wither them ; but well Joanna knew, early at Domrémy she had read that bitter truth, that the lilies of France would decorate no garland for *her*. Flower nor bud, bell nor blossom, would ever bloom for *her* !

But stay. What reason is there for taking up this subject of Joanna precisely in the spring of 1847 ? Might it not have been left till the spring of 1947, or, perhaps, left till called for ? Yes, but it *is* called for, and clamorously. You are aware, reader, that among the many original thinkers whom modern France has produced, one of the reputed leaders is M. Michelet. All these writers are of a revolutionary cast ; not in a political sense merely, but in all senses ; mad, oftentimes, as March hares ; crazy with the laughing gas of recovered liberty ; drunk with the wine-cup of their mighty Revolution, snorting, whinnying, throwing up their heels, like wild horses in the boundless pampas, and running races of defiance with snipes, or with the winds, or with their own shadows, if they can find nothing else to challenge. Some time or other, I, that have leisure to read, may introduce *you*, that have not, to two or three dozen of these writers ;

of whom I can assure you beforehand that they are often profound, and at intervals are even as impassioned as if they were come of our best English blood. But now, confining our attention to M. Michelet, we in England—who know him best by his worst book, the book against priests, etc.—know him disadvantageously. That book is a rhapsody of incoherence. But his “History of France” is quite another thing. A man, in whatsoever craft he sails, cannot stretch away out of sight when he is linked to the windings of the shore by towing ropes of History. Facts, and the consequences of facts, draw the writer back to the falconer’s lure from the giddiest heights of speculation. Here, therefore—in his “France”—if not always free from flightiness, if now and then off like a rocket for an airy wheel in the clouds, M. Michelet, with natural politeness, never forgets that he has left a large audience waiting for him on earth, and gazing upward in anxiety for his return; return, therefore, he does. But History, though clear of certain temptations in one direction, has separate dangers of its own. It is impossible so to write a history of France, or of England—works becoming every hour more indispensable to the inevitably political man of this day—without perilous openings for error. If I, for instance, on the part of England, should happen to turn my labors into that channel, and (on the model of Lord Percy going to Chevy Chase)

30                   A vow to God should make  
                   My pleasure in the Michelet woods  
                   Three summer days to take,  
 probably, from simple delirium; I might hunt M.

Michelet into *delirium tremens*. Two strong angels stand by the side of History, whether French history or English, as heraldic supporters: the angel of research on the left hand, that must read millions of dusty parchments, and of pages blotted with lies; 5 the angel of meditation on the right hand, that must cleanse these lying records with fire, even as of old the draperies of asbestos were cleansed, and must quicken them into regenerated life. Willingly I acknowledge that no man will ever avoid innumerable errors of detail; with so vast a compass of ground to traverse, this is impossible; but such errors (though I have a bushel on hand, at M. Michelet's service) are not the game I chase; it is the bitter and unfair spirit in which M. Michelet writes against 15 England. Even *that*, after all, is but my secondary object; the real one is Joanna, the Pucelle d'Orléans for herself.

I am not going to write the history of La Pucelle: to do this, or even circumstantially to report the history of her persecution and bitter death, of her struggle with false witnesses and with ensnaring judges, it would be necessary to have before us *all* the documents, and therefore the collection only now forthcoming in Paris.\* But *my* purpose is narrower. 25 There have been great thinkers, disdaining the careless judgments of contemporaries, who have thrown themselves boldly on the judgment of a far posterity,

\* "*Only now forthcoming.*"—In 1847 *began* the publication (from official records) of Joanna's trial. It was interrupted, I 30 fear, by the convulsions of 1848; and whether even yet finished I do not know.

that should have had time to review, to ponder, to compare. There have been great actors on the stage of tragic humanity that might, with the same depth of confidence, have appealed from the levity of com-  
5 patriot friends—too heartless for the sublime interest of their story, and too impatient for the labor of sifting its perplexities—to the magnanimity and justice of enemies. To this class belongs the Maid of Arc. The ancient Romans were too faithful to the ideal of  
10 grandeur in themselves not to relent, after a generation or two, before the grandeur of Hannibal. Mithridates, a more doubtful person, yet, merely for the magic perseverance of his indomitable malice, won from the same Romans the only real honor that ever  
15 he received on earth. And we English have ever shown the same homage to stubborn enmity. To work unflinchingly for the ruin of England; to say through life, by word and by deed, *Delenda est Anglia Victrix!*—that one purpose of malice, faithfully pur-  
20 sued, has quartered some people upon our national funds of homage as by a perpetual annuity. Better than an inheritance of service rendered to England herself has sometimes proved the most insane hatred to England. Hyder Ali, even his son Tippoo, though  
25 so far inferior, and Napoleon, have all benefited by this disposition among ourselves to exaggerate the merit of diabolic enmity. Not one of these men was ever capable, in a solitary instance, of praising an enemy (what do you say to *that*, reader?); and  
30 yet, in *their* behalf, we consent to forget, not their crimes only, but (which is worse) their hideous bigotry and anti-magnanimous egotism—for nation-

ality it was not. Suffren, and some half dozen of other French nautical heroes, because rightly they did us all the mischief they could (which was really great), are names justly revered in England. On the same principle, La Pucelle d'Orléans, the victorious enemy of England, has been destined to receive her deepest commemoration from the magnanimous justice of Englishmen.

Joanna, as we in England should call her, but according to her own statement, Jeanne (or, as M. Michelet asserts, Jean \*) D'Arc, was born at Domrémy, a village on the marches of Lorraine and Champagne, and dependent upon the town of Vaucouleurs. I have called her a Lorrainer, not simply because the word is prettier, but because Champagne too odiously reminds us English of what are for *us* imaginary wines—which, undoubtedly, La Pucelle tasted as rarely

\* "*Jean*."—M. Michelet asserts that there was a mystical meaning at that era in calling a child *Jean*; it implied a secret commendation of a child, if not a dedication, to St. John the evangelist, the beloved disciple, the apostle of love and mysterious visions. But, really, as the name was so exceedingly common, few people will detect a mystery in calling a *boy* by the name of Jack, though it *does* seem mysterious to call a girl Jack. It may be less so in France, where a beautiful practice has always prevailed of giving a boy his mother's name—preceded and strengthened by a male name, as *Charles Anne*, *Victor Victoire*. In cases where a mother's memory has been unusually dear to a son, this vocal memento of her, locked into the circle of his own name, gives to it the tenderness of a testamentary relic, or a funeral ring. I presume, therefore, that La Pucelle must have borne the baptismal name of Jeanne Jean; the latter with no reference, perhaps, to so sublime a person as St. John, but simply to some relative.

as we English : we English, because the champagne of London is chiefly grown in Devonshire ; La Pucelle, because the champagne of Champagne never, by any chance, flowed into the fountain of Domrémy, from  
5 which only she drank. M. Michelet will have her to be a *Champenoise*, and for no better reason than that she "took after her father," who happened to be a *Champenois*.

These disputes, however, turn on refinements too  
10 nice. Domrémy stood upon the frontiers, and, like other frontiers, produced a *mixed* race, representing the *cis* and the *trans*. A river (it is true) formed the boundary line at this point—the river Meuse ; and  
15 *that*, in old days, might have divided the populations ; but in these days it did not ; there were bridges, there were ferries, and weddings crossed from the right bank to the left. Here lay two great roads, not so much for travelers that were few, as for armies that were too many by half. These two roads, one of  
20 which was the great highroad between France and Germany, *decussated* at this very point ; which is a learned way of saying that they formed a St. Andrew's Cross, or letter X. I hope the compositor will choose a good large X ; in which case the point of intersec-  
25 tion, the *locus* of conflux and intersection for these four diverging arms, will finish the reader's geographical education, by showing him to a hair's-breadth where it was that Domrémy stood. These roads, so grandly situated, as great trunk arteries between two  
30 mighty realms,<sup>1</sup> and haunted forever by wars or

<sup>1</sup> And reminding one of that inscription, so justly admired by Paul Richter, which a Russian Czarina placed on a guide-post near Moscow : *This is the road that leads to Constantinople.*

rumors of wars, decussated (for anything I know to the contrary) absolutely under Joanna's bedroom window ; one rolling away to the right, past M. D'Arc's old barn, and the other unaccountably preferring to sweep round that odious man's pig-sty to the left. 5

On whichever side of the border chance had thrown Joanna, the same love to France would have been nurtured. For it is a strange fact, noticed by M. Michalet and others, that the Dukes of Bar and Lorraine had for generations pursued the policy of eternal warfare with France on their own account, yet also of eternal amity and league with France in case anybody else presumed to attack her. Let peace settle upon France, and before long you might rely upon seeing the little vixen Lorraine flying at the throat of France. Let France be assailed by a formidable enemy, and instantly you saw a Duke of Lorraine insisting on having his own throat cut in support of France ; which favor accordingly was cheerfully granted to him in three great successive battles : twice by the English, viz., at Crécy and Agincourt, once by the Sultan at Nicopolis. 10 15 20

This sympathy with France during great eclipses, in those that during ordinary seasons were always teasing her with brawls and guerilla inroads, strengthened the natural piety to France of those that were confessedly the children of her own house. The outposts of France, as one may call the great frontier provinces, were of all localities the most devoted to the *Fleurs de Lys*. To witness, at any great crisis, the generous devotion to these lilies of the little fiery cousin that in gentler weather was forever tilting at 25 30



the breast of France, could not but fan the zeal of France's legitimate daughters ; while to occupy a post of honor on the frontiers against an old hereditary enemy of France would naturally stimulate this zeal 5 by a sentiment of martial pride, by a sense of danger always threatening, and of hatred always smoldering. That great four-headed road was a perpetual memento to patriotic ardor. To say " This way lies the road to Paris, and that other way to Aix-la-Chapelle ; this to 10 Prague, that to Vienna," nourished the warfare of the heart by daily ministrations of sense. The eye that watched for the gleams of lance or helmet from the hostile frontier, the ear that listened for the groaning of wheels, made the highroad itself, with its relations 15 to centers so remote, into a manual of patriotic duty.

The situation, therefore, *locally*, of Joanna was full of profound suggestions to a heart that listened for the stealthy steps of change and fear that too surely were in motion. But, if the place were grand, the 20 time, the burden of the time, was far more so. The air overhead in its upper chambers was *hurting* with the obscure sound ; was dark with sullen fermenting of storms that had been gathering for a hundred and thirty years. The battle of Agincourt in Joanna's child- 25 hood had reopened the wounds of France. Crécy and Poitiers, those withering overthrows for the chivalry of France, had, before Agincourt occurred, been tranquilized by more than half a century ; but this resurrection of their trumpet wails made the whole series 30 of battles and endless skirmishes take their stations as parts in one drama. The graves that had closed sixty years ago seemed to fly open in sympathy with

a sorrow that echoed their own. The monarchy of France labored in extremity, rocked and reeled like a ship fighting with the darkness of monsoons. The madness of the poor king (Charles VI.) falling in at such a crisis, like the case of women laboring in childbirth during the storming of a city, trebled the awfulness of the time. Even the wild story of the incident which had immediately occasioned the explosion of this madness—the case of a man unknown, gloomy, and perhaps maniacal himself, coming out of a forest at noonday, laying his hand upon the bridle of the king's horse, checking him for a moment to say, "Oh, king, thou art betrayed," and then vanishing, no man knew whither, as he had appeared for no man knew what—fell in with the universal prostration of mind that laid France on her knees, as before the slow unweaving of some ancient prophetic doom. The famines, the extraordinary diseases, the insurrections of the peasantry up and down Europe—these were chords struck from the same mysterious harp; but these were transitory chords. There had been others of deeper and more ominous sound. The termination of the Crusades, the destruction of the Templars, the Papal interdicts, the tragedies caused or suffered by the house of Anjou, and by the Emperor—these were full of a more permanent significance. But, since then, the colossal figure of feudalism was seen standing, as it were on tiptoe, at Crécy, for flight from earth: that was a revolution unparalleled; yet *that* was a trifle by comparison with the more fearful revolutions that were mining below the Church. By her own internal schisms, by the abominable spectacle of a

double Pope—so that no man, except through political bias, could even guess which was Heaven's vicegerent, and which the creature of Hell—the Church was rehearsing, as in still earlier forms she had already rehearsed, those vast rents in her foundations which no man should ever heal.

These were the loftiest peaks of the cloudland in the skies that to the scientific gazer first caught the colors of the *new* morning in advance. But the whole vast range alike of sweeping glooms overhead dwelt upon all meditative minds, even upon those that could not distinguish the tendencies nor decipher the forms. It was, therefore, not her own age alone, as affected by its immediate calamities, that lay with such weight upon Joanna's mind, but her own age as one section in a vast mysterious drama, unweaving through a century back, and drawing nearer continually to some dreadful crisis. Cataracts and rapids were heard roaring ahead ; and signs were seen far back, by help of old men's memories, which answered secretly to signs now coming forward on the eye, even as locks answer to keys. It was not wonderful that in such a haunted solitude, with such a haunted heart, Joanna should see angelic visions, and hear angelic voices. These voices whispered to her forever the duty, self-imposed, of delivering France. Five years she listened to these monitory voices with internal struggles. At length she could resist no longer. Doubt gave way ; and she left her home forever in order to present herself at the dauphin's court.

The education of this poor girl was mean according to the present standard ; was ineffably grand, accord-

ing to a purer philosophic standard : and only not good for our age because for us it would be unattainable. She read nothing, for she could not read ; but she had heard others read parts of the Roman martyr-ology. She wept in sympathy with the sad " Mis- 5 ereres " of the Romish Church ; she rose to heaven with the glad triumphant " Te Deums " of Rome ; she drew her comfort and her vital strength from the rites of the same Church. But, next after these spiritual advantages, she owed most to the advantages of her situation. The fountain of Domrémy was on the brink of a boundless forest ; and it was haunted to that degree by fairies that the parish priest (*curé*) was obliged to read mass there once a year, in order to keep them in any decent bounds. Fairies are important, even in a 15 statistical view : certain weeds mark poverty in the soil ; fairies mark its solitude. As surely as the wolf retires before cities does the fairy sequester herself from the haunts of the licensed victualer. A village is too much for her nervous delicacy ; at most, she 20 can tolerate a distant view of a hamlet. We may judge, therefore, by the uneasiness and extra trouble which they gave to the parson, in what strength the fairies mustered at Domrémy, and, by a satisfactory consequence, how thinly sown with men and women 25 must have been that region even in its inhabited spots. But the forests of Domrémy—those were the glories of the land : for in them abode mysterious powers and ancient secrets that towered into tragic strength. " Abbeys there were, and abbey windows "—" like 30 Moorish temples of the Hindoos"—that exercised even princely power both in Lorraine and in the Ger-

man Diets. These had their sweet bells that pierced the forests for many a league at matins or vespers, and each its own dreamy legend. Few enough, and scattered enough, were these abbeys, so as in no  
5 degree to disturb the deep solitude of the region ; yet many enough to spread a network or awning of Christian sanctity over what else might have seemed a heathen wilderness. This sort of religious talisman being secured, a man the most afraid of ghosts (like  
10 myself, suppose, or the reader) becomes armed into courage to wander for days in their sylvan recesses. The mountains of the Vosges, on the eastern frontier of France, have never attracted much notice from Europe, except in 1813-14 for a few brief months,  
15 when they fell within Napoleon's line of defense against the Allies. But they are interesting for this among other features, that they do not, like some loftier ranges, repel woods ; the forests and the hills are on sociable terms. "Live and let live" is their  
20 motto. For this reason, in part, these tracts in Lorraine were a favorite hunting-ground with the Carlovingian princes. About six hundred years before Joanna's childhood, Charlemagne was known to have hunted there. That, of itself, was a grand incident in the  
25 traditions of a forest or a chase. In these vast forests, also, were to be found (if anywhere to be found) those mysterious fawns that tempted solitary hunters into visionary and perilous pursuits. Here was seen (if anywhere seen) that ancient stag who was already  
30 nine hundred years old, but possibly a hundred or two more, when met by Charlemagne ; and the thing was put beyond doubt by the inscription upon his golden

collar. I believe Charlemagne knighted the stag; and, if ever he is met again by a king, he ought to be made an earl, or, being upon the marches of France, a marquis. ●Observe, I don't absolutely vouch for all these things: my own opinion varies. On a fine 5 breezy forenoon I am audaciously skeptical; but as twilight sets in my credulity grows steadily, till it becomes equal to anything that could be desired. And I have heard candid sportsmen declare that, outside of these very forests, they laughed loudly at 10 all the dim tales connected with their haunted solitudes, but, on reaching a spot notoriously eighteen miles deep within them, they agreed with Sir Roger de Coverley that a good deal might be said on both sides.™

Such traditions, or any others that (like the stag) 15 connect distant generations with each other, are, for that cause, sublime; and the sense of the shadowy, connected with such appearances that reveal themselves or not according to circumstances, leaves a coloring of sanctity over ancient forests, even in those 20 minds that utterly reject the legend as a fact.

But, apart from all distinct stories of that order, in any solitary frontier between two great empires—as here, for instance, or in the desert between Syria and the Euphrates—there is an inevitable tendency, in 25 minds of any deep sensibility, to people the solitudes with phantom images of powers that were of old so vast. Joanna, therefore, in her quiet occupation of a shepherdess, would be led continually to brood over the political condition of her country by the traditions 30 of the past no less than by the mementoes of the local present.

M. Michelet, indeed, says that La Pucelle was *not* a shepherdess. I beg his pardon ; she *was*. What he rests upon I guess pretty well : it is the evidence of a woman called Haumette, the most confidential friend of Joanna. Now, she is a good witness, and a good girl, and I like her ; for she makes a natural and affectionate report of Joanna's ordinary life. But still, however good she may be as a witness, Joanna is better ; and she, when speaking to the dauphin, calls herself in the Latin report *Bergereta*. Even Haumette confesses that Joanna tended sheep in her girlhood. And I believe that, if Miss Haumette were taking coffee alone with me this very evening (February 12, 1847)—in which there would be no subject for scandal or for maiden blushes, because I am an intense philosopher, and Miss H. would be hard upon 450 years old—she would admit the following comment upon her evidence to be right. A Frenchman, about forty years ago—M. Simond, in his "Travels"—mentions accidentally the following hideous scene as one steadily observed and watched by himself in chivalrous France not very long before the French Revolution : A peasant was plowing ; and the team that drew his plow was a donkey and a woman. Both were regularly harnessed ; both pulled alike. This is bad enough ; but the Frenchman adds that, in distributing his lashes, the peasant was obviously desirous of being impartial ; or, if either of the yokefellows had a right to complain, certainly it was not the donkey. Now, in any country where such degradation of females could be tolerated by the state of manners, a woman of delicacy would shrink from

acknowledging, either for herself or her friend, that she had ever been addicted to any mode of labor not strictly domestic ; because, if once owning herself a prædial servant, she would be sensible that this confession extended by probability in the hearer's 5 thoughts to the having incurred indignities of this horrible kind. Haumette clearly thinks it more dignified for Joanna to have been darning the stockings of her horny-hoofed father, M. D'Arc, than keeping sheep, lest she might then be suspected of having 10 ever done something worse. But, luckily, there was no danger of *that* : Joanna never was in service ; and my opinion is that her father should have mended his own stockings, since probably he was the party to make the holes in them, as many a better man than 15 D'Arc does—meaning by *that* not myself, because, though probably a better man than D'Arc, I protest against doing anything of the kind. If I lived even with Friday in Juan Fernandez, either Friday must do all the darning, or else it must go undone. The 20 better men that I meant were the sailors in the British navy, every man of whom mends his own stockings. Who else is to do it ? Do you suppose, reader, that the junior lords of the admiralty are under articles to darn for the navy ? 25

The reason, meantime, for my systematic hatred of D'Arc is this : There was a story current in France before the Revolution, framed to ridicule the pauper aristocracy, who happened to have long pedigrees and short rent rolls : viz., that a head of such a house, 30 dating from the Crusades, was overheard saying to his son, a Chevalier of St. Louis, "*Chevalier, as-tu donné*



*au cochon à manger ?* " Now, it is clearly made out by the surviving evidence that D'Arc would much have preferred continuing to say, "*Ma fille, as-tu donné au cochon à manger ?*" to saying, "*Pucelle d'Orléans, as-tu*  
 5 *sauvé les fleurs-de-lys ?*" There is an old English copy of verses which argues thus :

If the man that turnips cries  
 Cry not when his father dies,  
 Then 'tis plain the man had rather  
 10 Have a turnip than his father.

I cannot say that the logic of these verses was ever *entirely* to my satisfaction. I do not see my way through it as clearly as could be wished. But I see my way most clearly through D'Arc; and the result  
 15 is—that he would greatly have preferred not merely a turnip to his father, but the saving a pound or so of bacon to saving the Oriflamme of France.

It is probable (as M. Michelet suggests) that the title of Virgin or Pucelle had in itself, and apart from  
 20 the miraculous stories about her, a secret power over the rude soldiery and partisan chiefs of that period; for in such a person they saw a representative manifestation of the Virgin Mary, who, in a course of centuries, had grown steadily upon the popular heart.

25 As to Joanna's supernatural detection of the dauphin (Charles VII.) among three hundred lords and knights, I am surprised at the credulity which could ever lend itself to that theatrical juggle. Who admires more than myself the sublime enthusiasm, the raptu-  
 30 rous faith in herself, of this pure creature? But I am far from admiring stage artifices which not La Pucelle,

but the court, must have arranged ; nor can surrender myself to the conjurer's legerdemain, such as may be seen every day for a shilling. Southey's "Joan of Arc" was published in 1796. Twenty years after, talking with Southey, I was surprised to find him still 5 owning a secret bias in favor of Joan, founded on her detection of the dauphin. The story, for the benefit of the reader new to the case, was this : La Pucelle was first made known to the dauphin, and presented to his court, at Chinon ; and here came her first trial. 10 By way of testing her supernatural pretensions, she was to find out the royal personage among the whole ark of clean and unclean creatures. Failing in this *coup d'essai*, she would not simply disappoint many a beating heart in the glittering crowd that on 15 different motives yearned for her success, but she would ruin herself, and, as the oracle within had told her, would, by ruining herself, ruin France. Our own Sovereign Lady Victoria rehearses annually a trial not so severe in degree, but the same in kind. She 20 "pricks" for sheriffs. Joanna pricked for a king. But observe the difference : our own Lady pricks for two men out of three ; Joanna for one man out of three hundred. Happy Lady of the Islands and the Orient !—she *can* go astray in her choice only by 25 one-half : to the extent of one-half she *must* have the satisfaction of being right. And yet, even with these tight limits to the misery of a boundless discretion, permit me, Liege Lady, with all loyalty, to submit that now and then you prick with your pin the 30 wrong man. But the poor child from Domrémy, shrinking under the gaze of a dazzling court—not

*because* dazzling (for in visions she had seen those that were more so), but because some of them wore a scoffing smile on their features—how should *she* throw her line into so deep a river to angle for a king, where many a gay creature was sporting that masqueraded as kings in dress! Nay, even more than any true king would have done: for, in Southey's version of the story, the dauphin says, by way of trying the virgin's magnetic sympathy with royalty,

10

On the throne,  
I the while mingling with the menial throng,  
Some courtier shall be seated.

This usurper is even crowned: "the jeweled crown shines on a menial's head." But, really, that is "*un peu fort*"; and the mob of spectators might raise a scruple whether our friend the jackdaw upon the throne, and the dauphin himself, were not grazing the shins of treason. For the dauphin could not lend more than belonged to him. According to the popular notion, he had no crown for himself; consequently none to lend, on any pretense whatever, until the consecrated Maid should take him to Rheims. This was the *popular* notion in France. But certainly it was the dauphin's interest to support the popular notion, as he meant to use the services of Joanna. For if he were king already, what was it that she could do for him beyond Orléans? That is to say, what more than a merely *military* service could she render him? And, above all, if he were king without a coronation, and without the oil from the sacred ampulla, what advantage was yet open to him by celerity above his com-

petitor, the English boy? Now was to be a race for a coronation : he that should win *that* race carried the superstition of France along with him : he that should first be drawn from the ovens of Rheims was under that superstition baked into a king. 5

La Pucelle, before she could be allowed to practice as a warrior, was put through her manual and platoon exercise, as a pupil in divinity, at the bar of six eminent men in wigs. According to Southey (v. 393, bk iii., in the original edition of his "Joan of Arc,") 10 she "appalled the doctors." It's not easy to do *that* : but they had some reason to feel bothered, as that surgeon would assuredly feel bothered who, upon proceeding to dissect a subject, should find the subject retaliating as a dissector upon himself, especially if Joanna ever made the speech to them which occupies v. 354-391, bk. iii. It is a double impossibility : 1st, because a piracy from Tindal's "Christianity as old as the Creation"—a piracy *a parte ante*, and by three centuries ; 2d, it is quite contrary to 20 the evidence on Joanna's trial. Southey's "Joan" of A. D. 1796 (Cottle, Bristol) tells the doctors, among other secrets, that she never in her life attended—1st, Mass ; nor 2d, the Sacramental Table ; nor 3d, Confession. In the meantime, all this deistical confession 25 of Joanna's, besides being suicidal for the interest of her cause, is opposed to the depositions upon *both* trials. The very best witness called from first to last deposes that Joanna attended these rites of her Church even too often ; was taxed with doing so ; 30 and, by blushing, owned the charge as a fact, though certainly not as a fault. Joanna was a girl of natural

piety, that saw God in forests and hills and fountains, but did not the less seek him in chapels and consecrated oratories.

This peasant girl was self-educated through her own natural meditateness. If the reader turns to that divine passage in "Paradise Regained" which Milton has put into the mouth of our Saviour when first entering the wilderness, and musing upon the tendency of those great impulses growing within him—  
 10 self——

Oh, what a multitude of thoughts at once  
 Awakened in me swarm, while I consider  
 What from within I feel myself, and hear  
 What from without comes often to my ears,  
 15 Ill sorting with my present state compared !  
 When I was yet a child, no childish play  
 To me was pleasing ; all my mind was set  
 Serious to learn and know, and thence to do,  
 What might be public good ; myself I thought  
 20 Born to that end——

he will have some notion of the vast reveries which brooded over the heart of Joanna in early girlhood, when the wings were budding that should carry her from Orléans to Rheims ; when the golden chariot  
 25 was dimly revealing itself that should carry her from the kingdom of *France Delivered* to the Eternal Kingdom.

It is not requisite for the honor of Joanna, nor is there in this place room, to pursue her brief career  
 30 of *action*. That, though wonderful, forms the earthly part of her story ; the spiritual part is the saintly passion of her imprisonment, trial, and execution. It is unfortunate, therefore, for Southey's "Joan of

Arc" (which, however, should always be regarded as a *juvenile* effort), that precisely when her real glory begins the poem ends. But this limitation of the interest grew, no doubt, from the constraint inseparably attached to the law of epic unity. Joanna's history bisects into two opposite hemispheres, and both could not have been presented to the eye in one poem, unless by sacrificing all unity of theme, or else by involving the earlier half, as a narrative episode, in the latter; which, however, might have been done, for it might have been communicated to a fellow-prisoner, or a confessor, by Joanna herself. It is sufficient, as concerns *this* section of Joanna's life, to say that she fulfilled, to the height of her promises, the restoration of the prostrate throne. France had become a province of England, and for the ruin of both, if such a yoke could be maintained. Dreadful pecuniary exhaustion caused the English energy to droop; and that critical opening La Pucelle used with a corresponding felicity of audacity and suddenness (that were in themselves portentous) for introducing the wedge of French native resources, for rekindling the national pride, and for planting the dauphin once more upon his feet. When Joanna appeared, he had been on the point of giving up the struggle with the English, distressed as they were, and of flying to the south of France. She taught him to blush for such abject counsels. She liberated Orleans, that great city, so decisive by its fate for the issue of the war, and then beleaguered by the English with an elaborate application of engineering skill unprecedented in Europe. Entering the city after sunset on the 29th

of April, she sang mass on Sunday, May 8, for the entire disappearance of the besieging force. On the 29th of June she fought and gained over the English the decisive battle of Patay ; on the 9th of July she took Troyes by a *coup-de-main* from a mixed garrison of English and Burgundians ; on the 15th of that month she carried the dauphin into Rheims ; on Sunday the 17th she crowned him ; and there she rested from her labor of triumph. All that was to be *done* she had now accomplished ; what remained was—to *suffer*.

All this forward movement was her own ; excepting one man, the whole council was against her. Her enemies were all that drew power from earth. Her supporters were her own strong enthusiasm, and the headlong contagion by which she carried this sublime frenzy into the hearts of women, of soldiers, and of all who lived by labor. Henceforward she was thwarted ; and the worst error that she committed was to lend the sanction of her presence to counsels which she had ceased to approve. But she had now accomplished the capital objects which her own visions had dictated. These involved all the rest. Errors were now less important ; and doubtless it had now become more difficult for herself to pronounce authentically what *were* errors. The noble girl had achieved, ~~as~~ by a rapture of motion, the capital end of clearing out a free space around her sovereign, giving him the power to move his arms with effect, and, secondly, the inappreciable end of winning for that sovereign what seemed to all France the heavenly ratification of his rights, by crowning him with the ancient

solemnities. She had made it impossible for the English now to step before her. They were caught in an irretrievable blunder, owing partly to discord among the uncles of Henry VI., partly to a want of funds, but partly to the very impossibility which they 5 believed to press with tenfold force upon any French attempt to forestall theirs. They laughed at such a thought ; and, while they laughed, she *did* it. Henceforth the single redress for the English of this capital oversight, but which never *could* have redressed it 10 effectually, was to vitiate and taint the coronation of Charles VII. as the work of a witch. That policy, and not malice (as M. Michelet is so happy to believe), was the moving principle in the subsequent prosecution of Joanna. Unless they unhinged the force of 15 the first coronation in the popular mind by associating it with power given from hell, they felt that the scepter of the invader was broken.

But she, the child that at nineteen had wrought wonders so great for France, was she not elated ? 20 Did she not lose, as men so often *have* lost, all sobriety of mind when standing upon the pinnacle of success so giddy ? Let her enemies declare. During the progress of her movement, and in the center of ferocious struggles, she had manifested the temper of 25 her feelings by the pity which she had everywhere expressed for the suffering enemy. She forwarded to the English leaders a touching invitation to unite with the French, as brothers, in a common crusade against infidels—thus opening the road for a soldierly retreat. 30 She interposed to protect the captive or the wounded ; she mourned over the excesses of her countrymen ;



she threw herself off her horse to kneel by the dying English soldier, and to comfort him with such ministrations, physical or spiritual, as his situation allowed. "Nolebat," says the evidence, "uti ense suo, aut quemquam interficere." She sheltered the English that invoked her aid in her own quarters. She wept as she beheld, stretched on the field of battle, so many brave enemies that had died without confession. And, as regarded herself, her elation expressed itself  
10 thus: on the day when she had finished her work, she wept; for she knew that, when her *triumphal* task was done, her end must be approaching. Her aspirations pointed only to a place which seemed to her more than usually full of natural piety, as one in which  
15 it would give her pleasure to die. And she uttered, between smiles and tears, as a wish that inexpressibly fascinated her heart, and yet was half fantastic, a broken prayer that God would return her to the solitudes from which he had drawn her, and suffer her to  
20 become a shepherdess once more. It was a natural prayer, because nature has laid a necessity upon every human heart to seek for rest and to shrink from torment. Yet, again, it was a half fantastic prayer, because, from childhood upward, visions that she  
25 had no power to mistrust, and the voices which sounded in her ear forever, had long since persuaded her mind that for *her* no such prayer could be granted. Too well she felt that her mission must be worked out to the end, and that the end was now at hand.  
30 All went wrong from this time. She herself had created the *funds* out of which the French restoration should grow; but she was not suffered to witness

their development or their prosperous application. More than one military plan was entered upon which she did not approve. But she still continued to expose her person as before. Severe wounds had not taught her caution. And at length, in a sortie from Compiègne (whether through treacherous collusion on the part of her own friends is doubtful to this day), she was made prisoner by the Burgundians, and finally surrendered to the English. 5

Now came her trial. This trial, moving of course 10 under English influence, was conducted in chief by the Bishop of Beauvais. He was a Frenchman, sold to English interests, and hoping, by favor of the English leaders, to reach the highest preferment. "Bishop that art, Archbishop that shalt be, Cardinal that may- 15 est be," were the words that sounded continually in his ear; and doubtless a whisper of visions still higher, of a triple crown, and feet upon the necks of kings, sometimes stole into his heart. M. Michelet is anxious to keep us in mind that this bishop was but an agent of 20 the English. True. But it does not better the case for his countryman that, being an accomplice in the crime, making himself the leader in the persecution against the helpless girl, he was willing to be all this in the spirit, and with the conscious vileness of a cat's- 25 paw. Never from the foundations of the earth was there such a trial as this, if it were laid open in all its beauty of defense and all its hellishness of attack. Oh, child of France! shepherdess, peasant girl! trodden underfoot by all around thee, how I honor 30 thy flashing intellect, quick as God's lightning, and true as God's lightning to its mark, that ran before

France and laggard Europe by many a century, confounding the malice of the ensnarer, and making dumb the oracles of falsehood ! Is it not scandalous, is it not humiliating to civilization, that, even at this day, 5 France exhibits the horrid spectacle of judges examining the prisoner against himself ; seducing him, by fraud, into treacherous conclusions against his own head ; using the terrors of their power for extorting confessions from the frailty of hope ; nay (which is 10 worse), using the blandishments of condescension and snaky kindness for thawing into compliances of gratitude those whom they had failed to freeze into terror ? Wicked judges ! barbarian jurisprudence !—that, sitting in your own conceit on the summits of social 15 wisdom, have yet failed to learn the first principles of criminal justice—sit ye humbly and with docility at the feet of this girl from Domrémy, that tore your webs of cruelty into shreds and dust. “ Would you examine me as a witness against myself ? ” was the question by 20 which many times she defied their arts. Continually she showed that their interrogations were irrelevant to any business before the court, or that entered into the ridiculous charges against her. General questions were proposed to her on points of casuistical divinity ; 25 two-edged questions, which not one of themselves could have answered, without, on the one side, landing himself in heresy (as then interpreted), or, on the other, in some presumptuous expression of self-esteem. Next came a wretched Dominican, that pressed her 30 with an objection, which, if applied to the Bible, would tax every one of its miracles with unsoundness. The monk had the excuse of never having read the Bible.

M. Michelet has no such excuse ; and it makes one blush for him, as a philosopher, to find him describing such an argument as "weighty," whereas it is but a varied expression of rude Mohammedan metaphysics. Her answer to this, if there were room to place the whole in a clear light, was as shattering as it was rapid. Another thought to entrap her by asking what language the angelic visitors of her solitude had talked—as though heavenly counsels could want polyglot interpreters for every word, or that God needed language at all in whispering thoughts to a human heart. Then came a worse devil, who asked her whether the Archangel Michael had appeared naked. Not comprehending the vile insinuation, Joanna, whose poverty suggested to her simplicity that it might be the *costliness* of suitable robes which caused the demur, asked them if they fancied God, who clothed the flowers of the valleys, unable to find raiment for his servants. The answer of Joanna moves a smile of tenderness, but the disappointment of her judges makes one laugh exultingly. Others succeeded by troops, who upbraided her with leaving her father ; as if that greater Father, whom she believed herself to have been serving, did not retain the power of dispensing with his own rules, or had not said that for a less cause than martyrdom man and woman should leave both father and mother.

On Easter Sunday, when the trial had been long proceeding, the poor girl fell so ill as to cause a belief that she had been poisoned. It was not poison. No body had any interest in hastening a death so certain. M. Michelet, whose sympathies with all feelings are so

quick that one would gladly see them always as justly directed, reads the case most truly. Joanna had a twofold malady. She was visited by a paroxysm of the complaint called *homesickness*. The cruel nature  
5 of her imprisonment, and its length, could not but point her solitary thoughts, in darkness and in chains (for chained she was), to Domrémy. And the season, which was the most heavenly period of the spring, added stings to this yearning. That was one of her  
10 maladies—*nostalgia*, as medicine calls it; the other was weariness and exhaustion from daily combats with malice. She saw that everybody hated her and thirsted for her blood; nay, many kind-hearted creatures that would have pitied her profoundly, as re-  
15 garded all political charges, had their natural feelings warped by the belief that she had dealings with fiendish powers. She knew she was to die; that was *not* the misery! the misery was that this consummation could not be reached without so much intermediate  
20 strife, as if she were contending for some chance (where chance was none) of happiness, or were dreaming for a moment of escaping the inevitable. Why, then, *did* she contend? Knowing that she would reap nothing from answering her persecutors, why did she  
25 not retire by silence from the superfluous contest? It was because her quick and eager loyalty to truth would not suffer her to see it darkened by frauds which *she* could expose, but others, even of candid listeners, perhaps, could not; it was through that im-  
30 perishable grandeur of soul which taught her to submit meekly and without a struggle to her punishment, but taught her *not* to submit—no, not for a moment—

to calumny as to facts, or to misconstruction as to motives. Besides, there were secretaries all around the court taking down her words. That was meant for no good to *her*. But the end does not always correspond to the meaning. And Joanna might say to herself, "These words that will be used against me to-morrow and the next day, perhaps, in some nobler generation, may rise again for my justification." Yes, Joanna, they *are* rising even now in Paris, and for more than justification !

Woman, sister, there are some things which you do not execute as well as your brother, man ; no, nor ever will. Pardon me if I doubt whether you will ever produce a great poet from your choirs, or a Mozart, or a Phidias, or a Michael Angelo, or a great philosopher, or a great scholar. By which last is meant—not one who depends simply on an infinite memory, but also on an infinite and electrical power of combination ; bringing together from the four winds, like the angel of the resurrection, what else were dust from dead men's bones, into the unity of breathing life. If you *can* create yourselves into any of these great creators, why have you not ?

Yet, sister woman, though I cannot consent to find a Mozart or a Michael Angelo in your sex, cheerfully, and with the love that burns in depths of admiration, I acknowledge that you can do one thing as well as the best of us men—a greater thing than even Milton is known to have done, or Michael Angelo ; you can die grandly, and as goddesses would die, were goddesses mortal. If any distant worlds (which *may* be the case) are so far ahead of us Tellurians in optical

resources as to see distinctly through their telescopes  
all that we do on earth, what is the grandest sight to  
which we ever treat them? St. Peter's at Rome, do  
you fancy, on Easter Sunday, or Luxor, or perhaps  
5 the Himalayas? Oh, no! my friend; suggest some-  
thing better; these are baubles to *them*; they see in  
other worlds, in their own, far better toys of the same  
kind. These, take my word for it, are nothing. Do  
you give it up? The finest thing, then, we have to  
10 show them is a scaffold on the morning of execu-  
tion. I assure you there is a strong muster in those  
far telescopic worlds, on any such morning, of those  
who happen to find themselves occupying the right  
hemisphere for a peep at *us*. How, then, if it be an-  
15 nounced in some such telescopic world by those who  
make a livelihood of catching glimpses at our news-  
papers, whose language they have long since deci-  
phered, that the poor victim in the morning's sacrifice  
is a woman? How, if it be published in that distant  
20 world that the sufferer wears upon her head, in the  
eyes of many, the garlands of martyrdom? How, if it  
should be some Marie Antoinette, the widowed queen,  
coming forward on the scaffold, and presenting to the  
morning air her head, turned gray by sorrow—  
25 daughter of Cæsars kneeling down humbly to kiss the  
guillotine, as one that worships death? How, if it  
were the noble Charlotte Corday, that in the bloom of  
youth, that with the loveliest of persons, that with  
homage waiting upon her smiles wherever she turned  
30 her face to scatter them—homage that followed those  
smiles as surely as the carols of birds, after showers  
in spring, follow the reappearing sun and the racing

of sunbeams over the hills—yet thought all these things cheaper than the dust upon her sandals, in comparison of deliverance from hell for her dear suffering France! Ah! these were spectacles indeed for those sympathizing people in distant worlds; and 5 some, perhaps, would suffer a sort of martyrdom themselves, because they could not testify their wrath, could not bear witness to the strength of love and to the fury of hatred that burned within them at such scenes, could not gather into golden urns some of 10 that glorious dust which rested in the catacombs of earth.

On the Wednesday after Trinity Sunday in 1431, being then about nineteen years of age, the Maid of Arc underwent her martyrdom. She was conducted 15 before midday, guarded by eight hundred spearmen, to a platform of prodigious height, constructed of wooden billets supported by occasional walls of lath and plaster, and traversed by hollow spaces in every direction for the creation of air currents. The pile 20 "struck terror," says M. Michelet, "by its height"; and, as usual, the English purpose in this is viewed as one of pure malignity. But there are two ways of explaining all that. It is probable that the purpose was merciful. On the circumstances of the execution 25 I shall not linger. Yet, to mark the almost fatal felicity of M. Michelet in finding out whatever may injure the English name, at a moment when every reader will be interested in Joanna's personal appearance, it is really edifying to notice the ingenuity by 30 which he draws into light from a dark corner a very unjust account of it, and neglects, though lying upon



the highroad, a very pleasing one. Both are from English pens. Grafton, a chronicler, but little read, being a stiffnecked John Bull, thought fit to say that no wonder Joanna should be a virgin, since her "foule  
5 face" was a satisfactory solution of that particular merit. Holinshead, on the other hand, a chronicler somewhat later, every way more important, and at one time universally read, has given a very pleasing testimony to the interesting character of Joanna's person  
10 and engaging manners. Neither of these men lived till the following century, so that personally this evidence is none at all. Grafton sullenly and carelessly believed as he wished to believe; Holinshead took pains to inquire, and reports undoubtedly the general  
15 impression of France. But I cite the case as illustrating M. Michelet's candor.\*

\* Amongst the many ebullitions of M. Michelet's fury against us poor English are four which will be likely to amuse the reader; and they are the more conspicuous in collision with the justice  
20 which he sometimes does us, and the very indignant admiration which, under some aspects, he grants to us.

1. Our English literature he admires with some gnashing of teeth. He pronounces it "fine and somber," but, I lament to add, "skeptical, Judaic, Satanic—in a word, antichristian."  
25 That Lord Byron should figure as a member of this diabolical corporation will not surprise men. It *will* surprise them to hear that Milton is one of its Satanic leaders. Many are the generous and eloquent Frenchmen, besides Chateaubriand, who have, in the course of the last thirty years, nobly suspended their own burning  
30 nationality, in order to render a more rapturous homage at the feet of Milton; and some of them have raised Milton almost to a level with angelic natures. Not one of them has thought of looking for him *below* the earth. As to Shakspeare, M. Michelet detects in him a most extraordinary mare's nest. It is this: he

The circumstantial incidents of the execution, unless with more space than I can now command, I should be unwilling to relate. I should fear to injure, by imperfect report, a martyrdom which to myself appears

does "not recollect to have seen the name of God" in any part of his works. On reading such words, it is natural to rub one's eyes, and suspect that all one has ever seen in this world may have been a pure ocular delusion. In particular, I begin myself to suspect that the word "*la gloire*" never occurs in any Parisian journal. "The great English nation," says M. Michelet, "has one immense profound vice"—to wit, "pride." Why, really, that may be true; but we have a neighbor not absolutely clear of an "immense profound vice," as like ours in color and shape as cherry to cherry. In short, M. Michelet thinks us, by fits and starts, admirable—only that we are detestable; and he would adore some of our authors, were it not that so intensely he could have wished to kick them.

2. M. Michelet thinks to lodge an arrow in our sides by a very odd remark upon Thomas à Kempis: which is, that a man of any conceivable European blood—a Finlander, suppose, or a Zantote—might have written Tom; only not an Englishman. Whether an Englishman could have forged Tom must remain a matter of doubt, unless the thing had been tried long ago. That problem was intercepted forever by Tom's perverseness in choosing to manufacture himself. Yet, since nobody is better aware than M. Michelet that this very point of Kempis *having* manufactured Kempis is furiously and hopelessly litigated, three or four nations claiming to have forged his work for him, the shocking old doubt will raise its snaky head once more—whether this forger, who rests in so much darkness, might not, after all, be of English blood. Tom, it may be feared, is known to modern English literature chiefly by an irreverent mention of his name in a line of Peter Pindar's (Dr. Wolcot) fifty years back, where he is described as

Kempis Tom,

Who clearly shows the way to Kingdom Come.

35

Few in these days can have read him, unless in the Methodist

so unspeakably grand. Yet, for a purpose, pointing not at Joanna, but at M. Michelet—viz., to convince him that an Englishman is capable of thinking more highly of La Pucelle than even her admiring country-

5 version of John Wesley. Among those few, however, happens to be myself ; which arose from the accident of having, when a boy of eleven, received a copy of the "De Imitatione Christi" as a bequest from a relation who died very young ; from which cause, and from the external prettiness of the book—being a Glasgow  
10 reprint by the celebrated Foulis, and gayly bound—I was induced to look into it, and finally read it many times over, partly out of some sympathy which, even in those days, I had with its simplicity and devotional fervor, but much more from the savage delight I found in laughing at Tom's Latinity. *That*, I freely grant to  
15 M. Michelet, is inimitable. Yet, after all, it is not certain whether the original *was* Latin. But, however *that* may have been, if it is possible that M. Michelet\* can be accurate in saying that there are no less than *sixty* French versions (not editions, observe, but separate versions) existing of the "De Imitatione," how prodigious must have been the adaptation of the book to the religious  
20 heart of the fifteenth century ! Excepting the Bible, but excepting *that* only in Protestant lands, no book known to man has had the same distinction. It is the most marvelous bibliographical fact on record.

25 3. Our English girls, it seems, are as faulty in one way as we English males in another. None of us men could have written the *Opera Omnia* of Mr. à Kempis ; neither could any of our girls

\* "If M. Michelet can be accurate."—However, on consideration, this statement does not depend on Michelet. The bibliographer Barbier has absolutely  
30 *specified* sixty in a separate dissertation, *soixante traductions*, among those even that have not escaped the search. The Italian translations are said to be thirty. As to mere *editions*, not counting the early MSS. for half a century before printing was introduced, those in Latin amount to 2000, and those in French to 1000. Meantime, it is very clear to me that this astonishing popularity, so entirely unparalleled in literature, could not have existed except in Roman Catholic times, nor subsequently have lingered in any Protestant land. It was the denial of Scripture fountains to thirsty lands which made this slender rill of Scripture truth so passionately welcome.

men—I shall, in parting, allude to one or two traits in Joanna's demeanor on the scaffold, and to one or two in that of the bystanders, which authorize me in questioning an opinion of his upon this martyr's firm-

have assumed male attire like La Pucelle. But why? Because, 5 says Michelet, English girls and German think so much of an indecorum. Well, that is a good fault, generally speaking. But M. Michelet ought to have remembered a fact in the martyrologies which justifies both parties—the French heroine for doing, and the general choir of English girls for *not* doing. A female 10 saint, specially renowned in France, had, for a reason as weighty as Joanna's—viz., expressly to shield her modesty among men—worn a male military harness. That reason and that example authorized La Pucelle; but our English girls, as a body, have seldom any such reason, and certainly no such saintly example, to 15 plead. This excuses *them*. Yet, still, if it is indispensable to the national character that our young women should now and then trespass over the frontier of decorum, it then becomes a patriotic duty in me to assure M. Michelet that we *have* such ardent females among us, and in a long series; some detected in naval hospitals 20 when too sick to remember their disguise; some on fields of battle; multitudes never detected at all; some only suspected; and others discharged without noise by war offices and other absurd people. In our navy, both royal and commercial, and generally from deep remembrances of slighted love, women have 25 sometimes served in disguise for many years, taking contentedly their daily allowance of burgoon, biscuit, or cannon-balls—anything, in short, digestible or indigestible, that it might please Providence to send. One thing, at least, is to their credit; never any of these poor masks, with their deep silent remembrances, 30 have been detected through murmuring, or what is nautically understood by “skulking.” So, for once, M. Michelet has an *erratum* to enter upon the fly-leaf of his book in presentation copies.

4. But the last of these ebullitions is the most lively. We 35 English, at Orleans, and after Orleans (which is not quite so

ness. The reader ought to be reminded that Joanna D'Arc was subjected to an unusually unfair trial of opinion. Any of the elder Christian martyrs had not much to fear of *personal* rancor. The martyr was chiefly regarded as the enemy of Cæsar; at times, also, where any knowledge of the Christian faith and

extraordinary, if all were told), fled before the Maid of Arc. Yes, says M. Michelet, you *did* : deny it, if you can. Deny it, *mon cher* ? I don't mean to deny it. Running away, in many cases, is a thing so excellent that no philosopher would, at times, condescend to adopt any other step. All of us nations in Europe, without one exception, have shown our philosophy in that way at times. Even people "*qui ne se rendent pas*" have deigned both to run and to shout "*Sauve qui peut !*" at odd times of sunset ; though, for my part, I have no pleasure in recalling unpleasant remembrances to brave men ; and yet, really, being so philosophic, they ought *not* to be unpleasant. But the amusing feature in M. Michelet's reproach is the way in which he *improves* and varies against us the charge of running, as if he were singing a catch. Listen to him: They "*showed their backs*," did these English. (Hip, hip, hurrah ! three times three !) "*Behind good walls they let themselves be taken*." (Hip, hip ! nine times nine !) They "*ran as fast as their legs could carry them*." (Hurrah ! twenty-seven times twenty-seven !) They "*ran before a girl*" ; they did. (Hurrah ! eighty-one times eighty-one !) This reminds one of criminal indictments on the old model in English courts, where (for fear the prisoner should escape) the crown lawyer varied the charge perhaps through forty counts. The law laid its guns so as to rake the accused at every possible angle. While the indictment was reading, he seemed a monster of crime in his own eyes ; and yet, after all, the poor fellow had but committed one offense, and not always *that*. N. B.—Not having the French original at hand, I make my quotations from a friend's copy of Mr. Walter Kelly's translation ; which seems to me faithful, spirited, and idiomatically English—liable, in fact, only to the single reproach of occasional provincialisms.

morals existed, with the enmity that arises spontaneously in the worldly against the spiritual. But the martyr, though disloyal, was not supposed to be therefore anti-national ; and still less was *individually* hateful. What was hated (if anything) belonged to his class, not to himself separately. Now, Joanna, if hated at all, was hated personally, and in Rouen on national grounds. Hence there would be a certainty of calumny arising against *her* such as would not affect martyrs in general. That being the case, it would follow of necessity that some people would impute to her a willingness to recant. No innocence could escape *that*. Now, had she really testified this willingness on the scaffold, it would have argued nothing at all but the weakness of a genial nature shrink-  
ing from the instant approach of torment. And those will often pity that weakness most who, in their own persons, would yield to it least. Meantime, there never was a calumny uttered that drew less support from the recorded circumstances. It rests upon no  
*positive* testimony, and it has a weight of contradicting testimony to stem. And yet, strange to say, M. Michelet, who at times seems to admire the Maid of Arc as much as I do, is the one sole writer among her  
*friends* who lends some countenance to this odious  
slander. His words are that, if she did not utter this word *recant* with her lips, she uttered it in her heart. "Whether she *said* the word is uncertain ; but I affirm that she *thought* it."

Now, I affirm that she did not ; not in any sense of the word "*thought*" applicable to the case. Here is France calumniating La Pucelle ; here is England de-

fending her. M. Michelet can only mean that, on *a priori* principles, every woman must be presumed liable to such a weakness ; that Joanna was a woman; *ergo*, that she was liable to such a weakness. That is, 5 he only supposes her to have uttered the word by an argument which presumes it impossible for anybody to have done otherwise. I, on the contrary, throw the onus of the argument not on presumable tendencies of nature, but on the known facts of that morn- 10 ing's execution, as recorded by multitudes. What else, I demand, than mere weight of metal, absolute nobility of deportment, broke the vast line of battle then arrayed against her ? What else but her meek, saintly demeanor won, from the enemies that till now 15 had believed her a witch, tears of rapturous admiration ? " Ten thousand men," says M. Michelet himself—"ten thousand men wept"; and of these ten thousand the majority were political enemies knitted together by cords of superstition. What else was it 20 but her constancy, united with her angelic gentleness, that drove the fanatic English soldier—who had sworn to throw a faggot on her scaffold as *his* tribute of abhorrence, that *did* so, that fulfilled his vow—suddenly to turn away a penitent for life, saying every- 25 where that he had seen a dove rising upon wings to heaven from the ashes where she had stood ? What else drove the executioner to kneel at every shrine for pardon to *his* share in the tragedy ? And, if all this were insufficient, then I cite the closing act of her life 30 as valid on her behalf, were all other testimonies against her. The executioner had been directed to apply his torch from below. He did so. The fiery

smoke rose upward in billowing volumes. A Dominican monk was then standing almost at her side. Wrapped up in his sublime office, he saw not the danger, but still persisted in his prayers. Even then, when the last enemy was racing up the fiery stairs 5 to seize her, even at that moment did this noblest of girls think only for *him*, the one friend that would not forsake her, and not for herself ; bidding him with her last breath to care for his own preservation, but to leave *her* to God. That girl, whose latest breath 10 ascended in this sublime expression of self-oblivion, did not utter the word *recant* either with her lips or in her heart. No ; she did not, though one should rise from the dead to swear it.

Bishop of Beauvais ! thy victim died in fire upon a 15 scaffold—thou upon a down bed. But, for the departing minutes of life, both are oftentimes alike. At the farewell crisis, when the gates of death are opening, and flesh is resting from its struggles, oftentimes the tortured and the torturer have the same truce from 20 carnal torment ; both sink together into sleep ; together both sometimes kindle into dreams. When the mortal mists were gathering fast upon you two, bishop and shepherd girl—when the pavilions of life were closing up their shadowy curtains about you—let 25 us try, through the gigantic glooms, to decipher the flying features of your separate visions.

The shepherd girl that had delivered France—she, from her dungeon, she, from her baiting at the stake, she, from her duel with fire, as she entered her last 30 dream—saw Domrémy, saw the fountain of Domrémy,



saw the pomp of forests in which her childhood had wandered. That Easter festival which man had denied to her languishing heart—that resurrection of springtime, which the darkness of dungeons had  
5 intercepted from *her*, hungering after the glorious liberty of forests—were by God given back into her hands as jewels that had been stolen from her by robbers. With those, perhaps (for the minutes of dreams can stretch into ages), was given back to her  
10 by God the bliss of childhood. By special privilege for *her* might be created, in this farewell dream, a second childhood, innocent as the first ; but not, like *that*, sad with the gloom of a fearful mission in the rear. This mission had now been fulfilled. The  
15 storm was weathered ; the skirts even of that mighty storm were drawing off. The blood that she was to reckon for had been exacted ; the tears that she was to shed in secret had been paid to the last. The hatred to herself in all eyes had been faced steadily,  
20 had been suffered, had been survived. And in her last fight upon the scaffold she had triumphed gloriously ; victoriously she had tasted the stings of death. For all, except this comfort from her farewell dream, she had died—died amid the tears of ten thousand  
25 enemies—died amid the drums and trumpets of armies—died amid peals redoubling upon peals, volleys upon volleys, from the saluting clarions of martyrs.

Bishop of Beauvais! because the guilt-burdened man  
30 is in dreams haunted and waylaid by the most frightful of his crimes, and because upon that fluctuating mirror—rising (like the mocking mirrors of *mirage* in Arab-

ian deserts) from the fens of death—most of all are reflected the sweet countenances which the man has laid in ruins; therefore I know, bishop, that you also, entering your final dream, saw Domrémy. That fountain, of which the witnesses spoke so much, showed itself to 5 your eyes in pure morning dews; but neither dews, nor the holy dawn, could cleanse away the bright spots of innocent blood upon its surface. By the fountain, bishop, you saw a woman seated, that hid her face. But, as *you* draw near, the woman raises her wasted 10 features. Would Domrémy know them again for the features of her child? Ah, but *you* know them, bishop, well! Oh, mercy! what a groan was *that* which the servants, waiting outside the bishop's dream at his bedside, heard from his laboring heart, as at this 15 moment he turned away from the fountain and the woman, seeking rest in the forests afar off. Yet not so to escape the woman, whom once again he must behold before he dies. In the forests to which he prays for pity, will he find a respite? What a tumult, 20 what a gathering of feet is there! In glades where only wild deer should run armies and nations are assembling; towering in the fluctuating crowd are phantoms that belong to departed hours. There is the great English Prince, Regent of France. There 25 is my Lord of Winchester, the princely cardinal, that died and made no sign. There is the Bishop of Beauvais, clinging to the shelter of thickets. What building is that which hands so rapid are raising? Is it a martyr's scaffold? Will they burn the child of 30 Domrémy a second time? No; it is a tribunal that rises to the clouds; and two nations stand around it,

waiting for a trial. Shall my Lord of Beauvais sit again upon the judgment-seat, and again number the hours for the innocent? Ah, no! he is the prisoner at the bar. Already all is waiting: the mighty audience is gathered, the Court is hurrying to their seats, the witnesses are arrayed, the trumpets are sounding, the judge is taking his place. Oh, but this is sudden! My lord, have you no counsel? "Counsel I have none; in heaven above, or on earth beneath, counselor  
10 there is none now that would take a brief from me: all are silent." Is it, indeed, come to this? Alas! the time is short, the tumult is wondrous, the crowd stretches away into infinity; but yet I will search in it for somebody to take your brief; I know of some-  
15 body that will be your counsel. Who is this that cometh from Domrémy? Who is she in bloody coronation robes from Rheims? Who is she that cometh with blackened flesh from walking the furnaces of Rouen? This is she, the shepherd girl, counselor  
20 that had none for herself, whom I choose, bishop, for yours. She it is, I engage, that shall take my lord's brief. She it is, bishop, that would plead for you; yes, bishop, *she*—when heaven and earth are silent.

## THE ENGLISH MAIL COACH.

### SECTION I—THE GLORY OF MOTION.

SOME twenty or more years before I matriculated at Oxford, Mr. Palmer, at that time M. P. for Bath, had accomplished two things, very hard to do on our little planet, the earth, however cheap they may be held by eccentric people in comets ; he had invented 5 mail coaches, and he had married the daughter of a duke.\* He was, therefore, just twice as great a man as Galileo, who did certainly invent (or, which is the same thing,† discover) the satellites of Jupiter, those very next things extant to mail coaches in the two 10 capital pretensions of speed and keeping time, but, on the other hand, who did *not* marry the daughter of a duke.

These mail coaches, as organized by Mr. Palmer, are entitled to a circumstantial notice from myself, 15 having had so large a share in developing the anarchies of my subsequent dreams; an agency which they accomplished, 1st, through velocity at that time unprecedented—for they first revealed the glory of

\* Lady Madeline Gordon.

20

† "*The same thing.*"—Thus, in the calendar of the Church Festivals, the discovery of the true cross (by Helen, the mother of Constantine) is recorded (and, one might think, with the express consciousness of sarcasm) as the *Invention* of the Cross.

motion ; 2d, through grand effects for the eye between lamplight and the darkness upon solitary roads ; 3d, through animal beauty and power so often displayed in the class of horses selected for this mail service ; 4th, through the conscious presence of a central intellect, that, in the midst of vast distances \*— of storms, of darkness, of danger—overruled all obstacles into one steady co-operation to a national result. For my own feeling, this post-office service spoke as by some mighty orchestra, where a thousand instruments, all disregarding each other, and so far in danger of discord, yet all obedient as slaves to the supreme baton of some great leader, terminate in a perfection of harmony like that of heart, brain, and lungs in a healthy animal organization. But, finally, that particular element in this whole combination which most impressed myself, and through which it is that to this hour Mr. Palmer's mail-coach system tyrannizes over my dreams by terror and terrific beauty, lay in the awful *political* mission which at that time it fulfilled. The mail coach it was that distributed over the face of the land, like the opening of apocalyptic vials, the heart-shaking news of Trafalgar, of Salamanca, of Vittoria, of Waterloo. These were the harvests that, in the grandeur of their reaping, redeemed the tears and blood in which they had been sown. Neither was the meanest peasant so much

\* "*Vast distances.*"—One case was familiar to mail-coach travelers where two mails in opposite directions, north and south, starting at the same minute from points six hundred miles apart, met almost constantly at a particular bridge which bisected the total distance.

below the grandeur and the sorrow of the times as to confound battles such as these, which were gradually molding the destinies of Christendom, with the vulgar conflicts of ordinary warfare, so often no more than gladiatorial trials of national prowess. The victories of England in this stupendous contest rose of themselves as natural "Te Deums" to heaven; and it was felt by the thoughtful that such victories, at such a crisis of general prostration, were not more beneficial to ourselves than finally to France, our enemy, and to the nations of all western or central Europe, through whose pusillanimity it was that the French domination had prospered.

The mail coach, as the national organ for publishing these mighty events, thus diffusively influential, became itself a spiritualized and glorified object to an impassioned heart; and naturally, in the Oxford of that day, *all* hearts were impassioned, as being all (or nearly all) in *early* manhood. In most universities there is one single college; in Oxford there were five-and-twenty, all of which were peopled by young men, the *élite* of their own generation; not boys, but men; none under eighteen. In some of these many colleges the custom permitted the student to keep what are called "short terms"; that is, the four terms of Michaelmas, Lent, Easter, and Act, were kept by a residence, in the aggregate, of ninety-one days, or thirteen weeks. Under this interrupted residence, it was possible that a student might have a reason for going down to his home four times in the year. This made eight journeys to and fro. But, as these homes lay dispersed through all the shires of the island, and

most of us disdained all coaches except his majesty's mail, no city out of London could pretend to so extensive a connection with Mr. Palmer's establishment as Oxford. Three mails, at the least, I remember as passing every day through Oxford, and benefiting by my personal patronage—viz., the Worcester, the Gloucester, and the Holyhead mail. Naturally, therefore, it became a point of some interest with us, whose journeys revolved every six weeks on an average, to look  
10 a little into the executive details of the system. With some of these Mr. Palmer had no concern; they rested upon by-laws enacted by posting houses for their own benefit, and upon other by-laws, equally stern, enacted by the inside passengers for the illustration of their  
15 own haughty exclusiveness. These last were of a nature to rouse our scorn; from which the transition was not very long to systematic mutiny. Up to this time, say 1804, or 1805 (the year of Trafalgar), it had been the fixed assumption of the four inside people  
20 (as an old tradition of all public carriages derived from the reign of Charles II.) that they, the illustrious quaternion, constituted a porcelain variety of the human race, whose dignity would have been compromised by exchanging one word of civility with the three miserable  
25 delftware outside. Even to have kicked an outsider might have been held to attain the foot concerned in that operation, so that, perhaps, it would have required an Act of Parliament to restore its purity of blood. What words, then, could express the  
30 horror, and the sense of treason, in that case which *had* happened, where all three outsides (the trinity of Pariahs) made a vain attempt to sit down at the same

Read by  
R. O.

DE QUINCEY.

breakfast table or dinner table with the consecrated  
four? I myself witnessed such an attempt; and on  
that occasion a benevolent old gentleman endeavored  
to soothe his three holy associates by suggesting that,  
if the outsides were indicted for this criminal attempt 5  
at the next assizes, the court would regard it as a case  
of lunacy or *delirium tremens* rather than of treason.  
England owes much of her grandeur to the depth of  
the aristocratic element in her social composition,  
when pulling against her strong democracy. I am 10  
not the man to laugh at it. But sometimes, undoubtedly,  
it expressed itself in comic shapes. The course  
taken with the infatuated outsiders, in the particular  
attempt which I have noticed, was that the waiter,  
beckoning them away from the privileged *salle à 15*  
*manger*, sang out, "This way, my good men," and  
then enticed these good men away to the kitchen.  
But that plan had not always answered. Sometimes,  
though rarely, cases occurred where the intruders,  
being stronger than usual, or more vicious than usual, 20  
resolutely refused to budge, and so far carried their  
point as to have a separate table arranged for them-  
selves in a corner of the general room. Yet, if an  
Indian screen could be found ample enough to plant  
them out from the very eyes of the high table, or dais, 25  
it then became possible to assume as a fiction of law  
that the three delft fellows, after all, were not present.  
They could be ignored by the porcelain men, under the  
maxim that objects not appearing and objects not ex-  
isting are governed by the same logical construction.\* 30

Such being at that time the usage of mail coaches,

\* *De non apparentibus*, etc.



what was to be done by us of young Oxford? We, the most aristocratic of people, who were addicted to the practice of looking down superciliously even upon the insides themselves as often very questionable characters—were we, by voluntarily going outside, to court indignities? If our dress and bearing sheltered us generally from the suspicion of being “raff” (the name at that period for “snobs” \*), we really *were* such constructively by the place we assumed. If we did not submit to the deep shadow of eclipse, we entered at least the skirts of its penumbra. And the analogy of theaters was valid against us—where no man can complain of the annoyances incident to the pit or gallery, having his instant remedy in paying the higher price of the boxes. But the soundness of this analogy we disputed. In the case of the theater, it cannot be pretended that the inferior situations have any separate attractions, unless the pit may be supposed to have an advantage for the purposes of the critic or the dramatic reporter. But the critic or reporter is a rarity. For most people, the sole benefit is in the price. Now, on the contrary, the outside of the mail had its own incommunicable advantages. These we could not forego. The higher price we would willingly have paid, but not the price connected with the condition of riding inside; which condition we pronounced insufferable. The air, the freedom of

\* “*Snobs*,” and its antithesis, “*nobs*,” arose among the internal factions of shoemakers perhaps ten years later. Possibly enough, the terms may have existed much earlier; but they were then first made known, picturesquely and effectively, by a trial at some assizes which happened to fix the public attention.

prospect, the proximity to the horses, the elevation of seat ; these were what we required ; but, above all, the certain anticipation of purchasing occasional opportunities of driving.

Such was the difficulty which pressed us ; and 5 under the coercion of this difficulty we instituted a searching inquiry into the true quality and valuation of the different apartments about the mail. We conducted this inquiry on metaphysical principles ; and it was ascertained satisfactorily that the roof of the 10 coach, which by some weak men had been called the attics, and by some the garrets, was in reality the drawing room ; in which drawing room the box was the chief ottoman or sofa ; while it appeared that the *inside*, which had been traditionally regarded as the 15 only room tenantable by gentlemen, was, in fact, the coal cellar in disguise.

Great wits jump. The very same idea had not long before struck the celestial intellect of China. Among the presents carried out by our first embassy 20 to that country was a state coach. It had been specially selected as a personal gift by George III.; but the exact mode of using it was an intense mystery to Pekin. The ambassador, indeed (Lord Macartney), had made some imperfect explanations upon this 25 point ; but, as His Excellency communicated these in a diplomatic whisper at the very moment of his departure, the celestial intellect was very feebly illuminated, and it became necessary to call a cabinet council on the grand state question, "Where was the 30 Emperor to sit ?" The hammer cloth happened to be unusually gorgeous ; and, partly on that consider-

ation, but partly also because the box offered the most elevated seat, was nearest to the moon, and undeniably went foremost, it was resolved by acclamation that the box was the imperial throne, and, for  
5 the scoundrel who drove—he might sit where he could find a perch. The horses, therefore, being harnessed, solemnly his imperial majesty ascended his new English throne under a flourish of trumpets, having the first lord of the treasury on his right hand,  
10 and the chief jester on his left. Pekin gloried in the spectacle; and in the whole flowery people, constructively present by representation, there was but one discontented person, and *that* was the coachman. This mutinous individual audaciously shouted,  
15 “Where am *I* to sit?” But the privy council, incensed by his disloyalty, unanimously opened the door and kicked him into the inside. He had all the inside place to himself; but such is the rapacity of ambition that he was still dissatisfied. “I say,” he  
20 cried out in an extempore petition addressed to the emperor through the window—“I say, how am I to catch hold of the reins?”—“Anyhow,” was the imperial answer; “don’t trouble *me*, man, in my glory. How catch the reins? Why, through the windows,  
25 through the keyholes—*anyhow*.” Finally this contumacious coachman lengthened the check-strings into a sort of jury-reins communicating with the horses; with these he drove as steadily as Pekin had any right to expect. The emperor returned after the briefest of  
30 circuits; he descended in great pomp from his throne, with the severest resolution never to remount it. A public thanksgiving was ordered for his majesty’s

happy escape from the disease of broken neck ; and the state coach was dedicated thenceforward as a votive offering to the god Fo Fo—whom the learned more accurately called Fi Fi.

A revolution of this same Chinese character did 5 young Oxford of that era effect in the constitution of mail-coach society. It was a perfect French Revolution ; and we had good reason to say, *ça ira*. In fact, it soon became *too* popular. The “public”—a well-known character, particularly disagreeable, 10 though slightly respectable, and notorious for affecting the chief seats in synagogues—had at first loudly opposed this revolution ; but, when the opposition showed itself to be ineffectual, our disagreeable friend went into it with headlong zeal. At first it was a sort 15 of race between us ; and, as the public is usually from thirty to fifty years old, naturally we of young Oxford, that averaged about twenty, had the advantage. Then the public took to bribing, giving fees to horsekeepers, etc., who hired out their persons as 20 warming pans on the box seat. *That*, you know, was shocking to all moral sensibilities. Come to bribery, said we, and there is an end to all morality—Aristotle’s, Zeno’s, Cicero’s, or anybody’s. And, besides, of what use was it ? For *we* bribed also. And, as 25 our bribes, to those of the public, were as five shillings to sixpence, here again young Oxford had the advantage. But the contest was ruinous to the principles of the stables connected with the mails. This whole corporation was constantly bribed, rebribed, and often 30 sur-rebribed ; a mail-coach yard was like the hustings in a contested election ; and a horsekeeper, ostler,

or helper, was held by the philosophical at that time to be the most corrupt character in the nation.

There was an impression upon the public mind, natural enough from the continually augmenting  
5 velocity of the mail, but quite erroneous, that an outside seat on this class of carriages was a post of danger. On the contrary, I maintained that, if a man had become nervous from some gypsy prediction in his childhood, allocating to a particular moon, now  
10 approaching, some unknown danger, and he should inquire earnestly, "Whither can I fly for shelter? Is a prison the safest retreat? or a lunatic hospital? or the British Museum?" I should have replied, "Oh, no; I'll tell you what to do. Take lodgings for the  
15 next forty days on the box of his majesty's mail. Nobody can touch you there. If it is by bills at ninety days after date that you are made unhappy—if noters and protesters are the sort of wretches whose astrological shadows darken the house of life—then  
20 note you what I vehemently protest, viz., that no matter though the sheriff and under-sheriff in every county should be running after you with his *posse*, touch a hair of your head he cannot while you keep house and have your legal domicile on the box of the  
25 mail. It is felony to stop the mail; even the sheriff cannot do that. And an *extra* touch of the whip to the leaders (no great matter if it grazes the sheriff) at any time guarantees your safety." In fact, a bedroom in a quiet house seems a safe enough retreat; yet it  
30 is liable to its own notorious nuisances—to robbers by night, to rats, to fire. But the mail laughs at these terrors. To robbers, the answer is packed up and

ready for delivery in the barrel of the guard's blunderbuss. Rats, again ! there *are* none about mail-coaches, any more than snakes in Von Troil's Iceland\* ; except, indeed, now and then a parliamentary rat, who always hides his shame in what I have shown to be the "coal cellar." And, as to fire, I never knew but one in a mail coach ; which was in the Exeter mail, and caused by an obstinate sailor bound to Devonport. Jack, making light of the law and the lawgiver that had set their faces against his offense, insisted on taking up a forbidden seat † in the rear of the roof,

\* "*Von Troil's Iceland.*"—The allusion is to a well-known chapter in Von Troil's work, entitled, "Concerning the Snakes of Iceland." The entire chapter consists of these six words—  
 "There are no snakes in Iceland."

15

† "*Forbidden Seat.*"—The very sternest code of rules was enforced upon the mails by the Post Office. Throughout England, only three outsides were allowed, of whom one was to sit on the box, and the other two immediately behind the box ; none, under any pretext, to come near the guard ; an indispensable caution ; since else, under the guise of a passenger, a robber might by any one of a thousand advantages—which sometimes are created, but always are favored, by the animation of frank social intercourse—have disarmed the guard. Beyond the Scottish border, the regulation was so far relaxed as to allow *four* outsides, but not relaxed at all as to the mode of placing them. One, as before, was seated on the box, and the other three on the front of the roof, with a determinate and ample separation from the little insulated chair of the guard. This relaxation was conceded by way of compensating to Scotland her disadvantages in point of population. England, by the superior density of her population, might always count upon a large fund of profits in the fractional trips of chance passengers riding for short distances of two or three stages. In Scotland this chance counted for much less. And therefore, to make good the deficiency, Scotland was allowed a compensatory profit upon one *extra* passenger.

35

from which he could exchange his own yarns with those of the guard. No greater offense was then known to mail coaches ; it was treason, it was *lesa majestas*, it was by tendency arson ; and the ashes of Jack's pipe, falling among the straw of the hinder boot, containing the mailbags, raised a flame which (aided by the wind of our motion) threatened a revolution in the republic of letters. Yet even this left the sanctity of the box unviolated. In dignified repose, the coachman and myself sat on, resting with benign composure upon our knowledge that the fire would have to burn its way through four inside passengers before it could reach ourselves. I remarked to the coachman, with a quotation from Virgil's *Æneid* really too hackneyed :

Jam proximus ardet  
Ucalegon.

But, recollecting that the Virgilian part of the coachman's education might have been neglected, I interpreted so far as to say that perhaps at that moment the flames were catching hold of our worthy brother and inside passenger, Ucalegon. The coachman made no answer—which is my own way when a stranger addresses me either in Syriac or in Coptic ; but by his faint skeptical smile he seemed to insinuate that he knew better—for that Ucalegon, as it happened, was not in the way-bill, and therefore could not have been booked.

No dignity is perfect which does not at some point ally itself with the mysterious. The connection of the mail with the state and the executive government—a connection obvious, but yet not strictly defined—

gave to the whole mail establishment an official grandeur which did us service on the roads, and invested us with seasonable terrors. Not the less impressive were those terrors because their legal limits were imperfectly ascertained. Look at those turnpike gates; with what deferential hurry, with what an obedient start, they fly open at our approach! Look at that long line of carts and carters ahead, audaciously usurping the very crest of the road. Ah, traitors! they do not hear us as yet; but, as soon as the dreadful blast of our horn reaches them with proclamation of our approach, see with what frenzy of trepidation they fly to their horses' heads, and deprecate our wrath by the precipitation of their crane-neck quarterings. Treason they feel to be their crime; each individual carter feels himself under the ban of confiscation and attainder; his blood is attainted through six generations; and nothing is wanting but the headsman and his axe, the block and the sawdust, to close up the vista of his horrors. What! shall it be within benefit of clergy to delay the king's message on the highroad—to interrupt the great respirations, ebb and flood, systole and diastole, of the national intercourse?—to endanger the safety of tidings running day and night between all nations and languages? Or can it be fancied, among the weakest of men, that the bodies of the criminals will be given up to their widows for Christian burial? Now, the doubts which were raised as to our powers did more to wrap them in terror, by wrapping them in uncertainty, than could have been effected by the sharpest definitions of the law from



the quarter sessions. We, on our parts (we, the collective mail, I mean), did our utmost to exalt the idea of our privileges by the insolence with which we wielded them. Whether this insolence rested upon  
 5 law that gave it a sanction, or upon conscious power that haughtily dispensed with that sanction, equally it spoke from a potential station ; and the agent, in each particular insolence of the moment, was viewed reverentially, as one having authority.

10 Sometimes after breakfast his majesty's mail would become frisky ; and, in its difficult wheelings among the intricacies of early markets, it would upset an apple cart, a cart loaded with eggs, etc. Huge was the affliction and dismay, awful was the smash. I, as  
 15 far as possible, endeavored in such a case to represent the conscience and moral sensibilities of the mail ; and, when wildernesses of eggs were lying poached under our horses' hoofs, then would I stretch forth my hands in sorrow, saying (in words too celebrated  
 20 at that time, from the false echoes\* of Marengo), " Ah ! wherefore have we not time to weep over you ? "—which was evidently impossible, since, in fact, we had not time to laugh over them. Tied to post-office allowance, in some cases of fifty minutes for  
 25 eleven miles, could the royal mail pretend to undertake the offices of sympathy and condolence ? Could

\* "*False echoes.*"—Yes, false ! for the words ascribed to Napoleon, as breathed to the memory of Desaix, never were uttered at all. They stand in the same category of theatrical fictions as the  
 30 cry of the foundering line-of-battle ship *Vengeur*, as the vaunt of General Cambronne at Waterloo, "*La Garde meurt, mais ne se rend pas,*" or as the repartees of Talleyrand.

it be expected to provide tears for the accidents of the road? If even it seemed to trample on humanity, it did so, I felt, in discharge of its own more peremptory duties.

Upholding the morality of the mail, *a fortiori* I <sup>5</sup> upheld its rights; as a matter of duty, I stretched to the uttermost its privilege of imperial precedency, and astonished weak minds by the feudal powers which I hinted to be lurking constructively in the charters of this proud establishment. Once I remember being on <sup>10</sup> the box of the Holyhead mail, between Shrewsbury and Oswestry, when a tawdry thing from Birmingham, some Tallyho or Highflyer, all flaunting with green and gold, came up alongside of us. What a contrast to our royal simplicity of form and color in <sup>15</sup> this plebeian wretch! The single ornament on our dark ground of chocolate color was the mighty shield of the imperial arms, but emblazoned in proportions as modest as a signet ring bears to a seal of office. Even this was displayed only on a single panel, whis- <sup>20</sup> pering, rather than proclaiming, our relations to the mighty state; while the beast from Birmingham, our green-and-gold friend from false, fleeting, perjured Brummagem, had as much writing and painting on its sprawling flanks as would have puzzled a decipherer <sup>25</sup> from the tombs of Luxor. For some time this Birmingham machine ran along by our side—a piece of familiarity that already of itself seemed to me sufficiently jacobinical. But all at once a movement of the horses announced a desperate intention of leaving us <sup>30</sup> behind. “Do you see *that*?” I said to the coachman. “I see,” was his short answer. He was wide

awake—yet he waited longer than seemed prudent; for the horses of our audacious opponent had a disagreeable air of freshness and power. But his motive was loyal; his wish was that the Birmingham conceit  
5 should be full-blown before he froze it. When *that* seemed right, he unloosed, or, to speak by a stronger word, he *sprang*, his known resources: he slipped our royal horses like cheetahs, or hunting leopards, after the affrighted game. How they could retain such a  
10 reserve of fiery power after the work they had accomplished seemed hard to explain. But on our side, besides the physical superiority, was a tower of moral strength, namely the king's name, "which they upon the adverse faction wanted." Passing them without  
15 an effort, as it seemed, we threw them into the rear with so lengthening an interval between us as proved in itself the bitterest mockery of their presumption; while our guard blew back a shattering blast of triumph that was really too painfully full of  
20 derision.

I mention this little incident for its connection with what followed. A Welsh rustic, sitting behind me, asked if I had not felt my heart burn within me during the progress of the race? I said, with philosophic  
25 calmness, *No*; because we were not racing with a mail, so that no glory could be gained. In fact, it was sufficiently mortifying that such a Birmingham thing should dare to challenge us. The Welshman replied that he didn't see *that*; for that a cat might  
30 look at a king, and a Brummagem coach might lawfully race the Holyhead mail. "*Race* us, if you like," I replied, "though even *that* has an air of sedition;

but not *beat* us. This would have been treason ; and for its own sake I am glad that the Tallyho was disappointed." So dissatisfied did the Welshman seem with this opinion that at last I was obliged to tell him a very fine story from one of our elder dramatists : viz., that once, in some far Oriental kingdom when the sultan of all the land, with his princes, ladies, and chief omrahs were flying their falcons, a hawk suddenly flew at a majestic eagle, and, in defiance of the eagle's natural advantages, in contempt also of 10 the eagle's traditional royalty, and before the whole assembled field of astonished spectators from Agra and Lahore, killed the eagle on the spot. Amazement seized the sultan at the unequal contest, and burning admiration for its unparalleled result. He 15 commanded that the hawk should be brought before him ; he caressed the bird with enthusiasm ; and he ordered that, for the commemoration of his matchless courage, a diadem of gold and rubies should be solemnly placed on the hawk's head, but then that, 20 immediately after this solemn coronation, the bird should be led off to execution, as the most valiant indeed of traitors, but not the less a traitor, as having dared to rise rebelliously against his liege lord and anointed sovereign, the eagle. "Now," said I to the 25 Welshman, "to you and me, as men of refined sensibilities, how painful it would have been that this poor Brummagem brute, the Tallyho, in the impossible case of a victory over us, should have been crowned with Birmingham tinsel, with paste diamonds, and 30 Roman pearls, and then led off to instant execution." The Welshman doubted if that could be warranted

by law. And, when I hinted at the 6th of Edward Longshanks, chap. 18, for regulating the precedency of coaches, as being probably the statute relied on for the capital punishment of such offenses, he replied 5 dryly that, if the attempt to pass a mail really were treasonable, it was a pity that the Tallyho appeared to have so imperfect an acquaintance with law.

The modern modes of traveling cannot compare with the old mail-coach system in grandeur and power. 10 They boast of more velocity—not, however, as a consciousness, but as a fact of our lifeless knowledge, resting upon *alien* evidence: as, for instance, because somebody *says* that we have gone fifty miles in the hour, though we are far from feeling it as a personal 15 experience; or upon the evidence of a result, as that actually we find ourselves in York four hours after leaving London. Apart from such an assertion, or such a result, I myself am little aware of the pace. But, seated on the old mail coach, we needed no evi- 20 dence out of ourselves to indicate the velocity. On this system the word was not *magna loquimur*, as upon railways, but *vivimus*. Yes, “*magna vivimus*”; we do not make verbal ostentation of our grandeurs, we realize our grandeurs in act, and in the very experi- 25 ence of life. The vital experience of the glad animal sensibilities made doubts impossible on the question of our speed; we heard our speed, we saw it, we felt it as a thrilling; and this speed was not the product of blind insensate agencies, that had no sympathy to 30 give, but was incarnated in the fiery eyeballs of the noblest among brutes, in his dilated nostril, spasmodic muscles, and thunder-beating hoofs. The sensibility

of the horse, uttering itself in the maniac light of his eye, might be the last vibration of such a movement ; the glory of Salamanca might be the first. But the intervening links that connected them, that spread the earthquake of battle into the eyeball of the horse, 5 were the heart of man and its electric thrillings—kindling in the rapture of the fiery strife, and then propagating its own tumults by contagious shouts and gestures to the heart of his servant the horse. But now, on the new system of traveling, iron tubes and 10 boilers have disconnected man's heart from the ministers of his locomotion. Nile nor Trafalgar has power to raise an extra bubble in a steam kettle. The galvanic cycle is broken up forever ; man's imperial nature no longer sends itself forward through the 15 electric sensibility of the horse ; the inter-agencies are gone in the mode of communication between the horse and his master, out of which grew so many aspects of sublimity under accidents of mists that hid, or sudden blazes that revealed, or mobs that agitated, 20 or midnight solitudes that awed. Tidings fitted to convulse all nations must henceforward travel by culinary process ; and the trumpet that once announced from afar the laureled mail, heart-shaking when heard screaming on the wind and proclaiming 25 itself through the darkness to every village or solitary house on its route, has now given way for ever to the pot-walloping of the boiler. Thus have perished multiform openings for public expressions of interest, scenical yet natural, in great national tidings—for 30 revelations of faces and groups that could not offer themselves among the fluctuating mobs of a railway

station. The gatherings of gazers about a laureled mail had one center, and acknowledged one sole interest. But the crowds attending at a railway station have as little unity as running water, and own as many centers  
5 as there are separate carriages in the train.

How else, for example, than as a constant watcher for the dawn, and for the London mail that in summer months entered about daybreak among the lawnly thickets of Marlborough forest, couldst thou, sweet  
10 Fanny of the Bath road, have become the glorified inmate of my dreams? Yet Fanny, as the loveliest young woman for face and person that perhaps in my whole life I have beheld, merited the station which even now, from a distance of forty years, she holds in  
15 my dreams; yes, though by links of natural association she brings along with her a troop of dreadful creatures, fabulous and not fabulous, that are more abominable to the heart than Fanny and the dawn are delightful.

20 Miss Fanny of the Bath road, strictly speaking, lived at a mile's distance from that road, but came so continually to meet the mail that I on my frequent transits rarely missed her, and naturally connected her image with the great thoroughfare where only I  
25 had ever seen her. Why she came so punctually I do not exactly know; but I believe with some burden of commissions, to be executed in Bath, which had gathered to her own residence as a central rendezvous for converging them. The mail-coachman who drove  
30 the Bath mail and wore the royal livery\* happened to

\* "*Wore the royal livery.*"—The general impression was that the royal livery belonged of right to the mail-coachmen as their

de Fanny's grandfather. A good man he was, that loved his beautiful granddaughter, and, loving her wisely, was vigilant over her deportment in any case where young Oxford might happen to be concerned. Did my vanity then suggest that I myself, individually, could fall within the line of his terrors? Certainly not, as regarded any physical pretensions that I could plead; for Fanny (as a chance passenger from her own neighborhood once told me) counted in her train a hundred and ninety-nine professed admirers, if not open aspirants to her favor; and probably not one of the whole brigade but excelled myself in personal advantages. Ulysses even, with the unfair advantage of his accursed bow, could hardly have undertaken that amount of suitors. So the danger might have seemed slight—only that woman is universally aristocratic; it is among her nobilities of heart that she *is* so. Now, the aristocratic distinctions in my favor might easily with Miss Fanny have compensated my physical deficiencies. Did I then make love to Fanny? Why, yes; about as much love as one *could* make while the mail was changing horses—a process which, ten years later, did not occupy above eighty seconds; but *then*—viz., about Waterloo—it occupied five times eighty. Now, four hundred seconds offer a

professional dress. But that was an error. To the guard it *did* belong, I believe, and was obviously essential as an official warrant, and as a means of instant identification for his person, in the discharge of his important public duties. But the coachman, and especially if his place in the series did not connect him immediately with London and the General Post Office, obtained the scarlet coat only as an honorary distinction after long (or, if not long, trying and special) service.



field quite ample enough for whispering into a young woman's ear a great deal of truth, and (by way of parenthesis) some trifle of falsehood. Grandpapa did right, therefore, to watch me. And yet, as happens  
5 too often to the grandpapas of earth in a contest with the admirers of granddaughters, how vainly would he have watched me had I meditated any evil whispers to Fanny! She, it is my belief, would have protected herself against any man's evil suggestions. But he,  
10 as the result showed, could not have intercepted the opportunities for such suggestions. Yet, why not? Was he not active? Was he not blooming? Bloom-  
ing he was as Fanny herself. ✓

Say, all our praises why should lords——

15 Stop, that's not the line.

Say, all our roses why should girls engross?

The coachman showed rosy blossoms on his face deeper even than his granddaughter's—*his* being  
drawn from the ale cask, Fanny's from the fountains  
20 of the dawn. But, in spite of his blooming face, some infirmities he had; and one particularly in which he too much resembled a crocodile. This lay in a monstrous inaptitude for turning round. The crocodile, I presume, owes that inaptitude to the absurd *length* of his  
25 back; but in our grandpapa it arose rather from the absurd *breadth* of his back, combined, possibly, with some growing stiffness in his legs. Now, upon this crocodile infirmity of his I planted a human advantage for tendering my homage to Miss Fanny. In defiance  
30 of all his honorable vigilance, no sooner had he pre-

sented to us his mighty Jovian back (what a field for displaying to mankind his royal scarlet !), while inspecting professionally the buckles, the straps, and the silvery turrets\* of his harness, than I raised Miss Fanny's hand to my lips, and, by the mixed tenderness and 5 respectfulness of my manner, caused her easily to understand how happy it would make me to rank upon her list as No. 10 or 12 : in which case a few casualties among her lovers (and, observe, they *hanged* liberally in those days) might have promoted me speedily to 10 the top of the tree ; as, on the other hand, with how much loyalty of submission I acquiesced by anticipation in her award, supposing that she should plant me in the very rearward of her favor, as No. 199+1. Most truly I loved this beautiful and ingenuous girl ; 15 and, had it not been for the Bath mail, timing all courtships by post-office allowance, Heaven only knows what might have come of it. People talk of being over head and ears in love ; now, the mail was the cause that I sank only over ears in love—which, you 20 know, still left a trifle of brain to overlook the whole conduct of the affair.

Ah, reader ! when I look back upon those days, it seems to me that all things change—all things perish. "Perish the roses and the palms of kings ;" perish 25

\* "*Turrets*."—As one who loves and venerates Chaucer for his unrivalled merits of tenderness, of picturesque characterization, and of narrative skill, I noticed with great pleasure that the word *torrettes* is used by him to designate the little devices through which the reins are made to pass. This same word, in the same 30 exact sense, I heard uniformly used by many scores of illustrious mail-coachmen to whose confidential friendship I had the honor of being admitted in my younger days.

even the crowns and trophies of Waterloo ; thunder and lightning are not the thunder and lightning which I remember. Roses are degenerating. The Fannies of our island—thought his I say with reluctance—  
5 are not visibly improving ; and the Bath road is notoriously superannuated. Crocodiles, you will say, are stationary. Mr. Waterton tells me that the crocodile does *not* change—that a cayman, in fact, or an alligator, is just as good for riding upon as he was  
10 in the time of the Pharaohs. *That* may be ; but the reason is that the crocodile does not live fast—he is a slow coach. I believe it is generally understood among naturalists that the crocodile is a blockhead. It is my own impression that the Pharaohs were also  
15 blockheads. Now, as the Pharaohs and the crocodile domineered over Egyptian society, this accounts for a singular mistake that prevailed through innumerable generations on the Nile. The crocodile made the ridiculous blunder of supposing man to be meant  
20 chiefly for his own eating. Man, taking a different view of the subject, naturally met that mistake by another ; he viewed the crocodile as a thing sometimes to worship, but always to run away from. And this continued till Mr. Waterton\* changed the rela-

25 \* "*Mr. Waterton.*"—Had the reader lived through the last generation, he would not need to be told that, some thirty or thirty-five years back, Mr. Waterton, a distinguished country gentleman of ancient family in Northumberland, publicly mounted and rode in top-boots a savage old crocodile, that was  
30 restive and very impertinent, but all to no purpose. The crocodile jibbed and tried to kick, but vainly. He was no more able to throw the squire than Sinbad was to throw the old scoundrel who used his back without paying for it, until he discovered a mode

tions between the animals. The mode of escaping from the reptile he showed to be not by running away, but by leaping on its back booted and spurred. The two animals had misunderstood each other. The use of the crocodile has now been cleared up—viz., to be ridden ; and the final cause of man is that he may improve the health of the crocodile by riding him a-foxhunting before breakfast. And it is pretty certain that any crocodile who has been regularly hunted through the season, and is master of the weight he carries, will take a six-barred gate now as well as ever he would have done in the infancy of the Pyramids.

If therefore, the crocodile does *not* change, all things else undeniably *do* : even the shadow of the Pyramids grows less. And often the restoration in vision of Fanny and the Bath road makes me too pathetically sensible of that truth. Out of the darkness, if I happen to call back the image of Fanny, up rises suddenly from a gulf of forty years a rose in June ; or if I think for an instant of the rose in June, up rises the heavenly face of Fanny. One after the other, like the antiphonies in the choral service, rise Fanny and the rose in June, then back again the rose in June and Fanny. Then come both together, as in a chorus—roses and Fannies, Fannies and roses, without end, thick as blossoms in Paradise. Then comes a venerable crocodile, in a royal livery of scarlet and gold, with sixteen capes ; and the crocodile is driving four-in-hand from the box of the Bath mail. And (slightly immoral, perhaps, though some think not) of murdering the old fraudulent jockey, and so circuitously of unhorsing him.

suddenly we upon the mail are pulled up by a mighty dial, sculptured with the hours, that mingle with the heavens and the heavenly host. Then all at once we are arrived at Marlborough forest, among the lovely households\* of the roe deer; the deer and their fawns retire into the dewy thickets; the thickets are rich with roses; once again the roses call up the sweet countenance of Fanny; and she, being the granddaughter of a crocodile, awakens a dreadful host of semi-legendary animals—griffins, dragons, basilisks, sphinxes—till at length the whole vision of fighting images crowds into one towering armorial shield, a vast emblazonry of human charities and human loveliness that have perished, but quartered heraldically with unutterable and demoniac natures, while over all rises, as a surmounting crest, one fair female hand, with the forefinger pointing, in sweet, sorrowful admonition, upward to heaven, where is sculptured the eternal writing which proclaims the frailty of earth and her children.

## GOING DOWN WITH VICTORY.

But the grandest chapter of our experience within the whole mail-coach service was on those occasions when we went down from London with the news of

25 \* "*Households.*"—Roe deer do not congregate in herds like the fallow or the red deer, but by separate families, parents and children; which feature of approximation to the sanctity of human hearths, added to their comparatively miniature and graceful proportions, conciliates to them an interest of peculiar tenderness, supposing even that this beautiful creature is less characteristically  
30 impressed with the grandeurs of savage and forest life.

victory. A period of about ten years stretched from Trafalgar to Waterloo ; the second and third years of which period (1806 and 1807) were comparatively sterile ; but the other nine (from 1805 to 1815 inclusively) furnished a long succession of victories, the least of which, in such a contest of Titans, had an inappreciable value of position : partly for its absolute interference with the plans of our enemy, but still more from its keeping alive through central Europe the sense of a deep-seated vulnerability in France. Even to tease the coasts of our enemy, to mortify them by continual blockades, to insult them by capturing if it were but a baubling schooner under the eyes of their arrogant armies, repeated from time to time a sullen proclamation of power lodged in one quarter to which the hopes of Christendom turned in secret. How much more loudly must this proclamation have spoken in the audacity\* of having bearded

\* "*Audacity.*"—Such the French accounted it ; and it has struck me that Soult would not have been so popular in London, at the period of her present Majesty's coronation, or in Manchester, on occasion of his visit to that town, if they had been aware of the insolence with which he spoke of us in notes written at intervals from the field of Waterloo. As though it had been mere felony in our army to look a French one in the face, he said in more than one, dated from 2 to 4 P. M. on the field of Waterloo, "Here are the English—we have them ; they are caught *en flagrant délit.*" Yet no man should have known us better ; no man had drunk deeper from the cup of humiliation than Soult had in 1809, when ejected by us with headlong violence from Oporto, and pursued through a long line of wrecks to the frontier of Spain ; and subsequently at Albuera, in the bloodiest of recorded battles, to say nothing of Toulouse, he should have learned our pretensions.

the *élite* of their troops, and having beaten them in pitched battles ! Five years of life it was worth paying down for the privilege of an outside place on a mail coach, when carrying down the first tidings of any such event. And it is to be noted that, from our insular situation, and the multitude of our frigates disposable for the rapid transmission of intelligence, rarely did any unauthorized rumor steal away a prelibation from the first aroma of the regular dispatches.

10 The government news was generally the earliest news.

From 8 P. M. to fifteen or twenty minutes later imagine the mails assembled on parade in Lombard Street ; where, at that time,\* and not in St. Martin's-  
15 le-Grand, was seated the General Post Office. In what exact strength we mustered I do not remember ; but, from the length of each separate *attelage*, we filled the street, though a long one, and though we were drawn up in double file. On *any* night the spectacle  
20 was beautiful. The absolute perfection of all the appointments about the carriages and the harness, their strength, their brilliant cleanliness, their beautiful simplicity—but, more than all, the royal magnificence of the horses—were what might first have fixed the  
25 attention. Every carriage on every morning in the year was taken down to an official inspector for examination : wheels, axles, linchpins, pole, glasses, lamps, were all critically probed and tested. Every part of every carriage had been cleaned, every horse  
30 had been groomed, with as much rigor as if they belonged to a private gentleman ; and that part of the

\* “ *At that time.* ”—I speak of the era previous to Waterloo.

spectacle offered itself always. But the night before us is a night of victory ; and, behold ! to the ordinary display what a heart-shaking addition !—horses, men, carriages, all are dressed in laurels and flowers, oak-leaves and ribbons. The guards, as being officially 5 his majesty's servants, and of the coachmen such as are within the privilege of the Post Office, wear the royal liveries of course ; and, as it is summer (for all the *land* victories were naturally won in summer), they wear, on this fine evening, these liveries exposed to 10 view, without any covering of upper coats. Such a costume, and the elaborate arrangement of the laurels in their hats, dilate their hearts, by giving to them openly a personal connection with the great news in which already they have the general interest of patriot- 15 ism. That great national sentiment surmounts and quells all sense of ordinary distinctions. Those passengers who happen to be gentlemen are now hardly to be distinguished as such except by dress ; for the usual reserve of their manner in speaking to the at- 20 tendants has on this night melted away. One heart, one pride, one glory, connects every man by the transcendent bond of his national blood. The spectators, who are numerous beyond precedent, express their sympathy with these fervent feelings by continual 25 hurrahs. Every moment are shouted aloud by the post-office servants, and summoned to draw up, the great ancestral names of cities known to history through a thousand years—Lincoln, Winchester, Portsmouth, Gloucester, Oxford, Bristol, Manchester, 30 York, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, Stirling, Aberdeen—expressing the grandeur of the em-



pire by the antiquity of its towns, and the grandeur of the mail establishment by the diffusive radiation of its separate missions. Every moment you hear the thunder of lids locked down upon the mailbags. 5 That sound to each individual mail is the signal for drawing off ; which process is the finest part of the entire spectacle. Then come the horses into play. Horses ! can these be horses that bound off with the action and gestures of leopards ? What stir ! what 10 sea-like ferment ! what a thundering of wheels ! what a trampling of hoofs ! what a sounding of trumpets ! what farewell cheers ! what redoubling peals of brotherly congratulation, connecting the name of the particular mail—"Liverpool forever !" with the 15 name of the particular victory—"Badajoz forever !" or "Salamanca forever !" The half-slumbering consciousness that all night long, and all the next day—perhaps for even a longer period—many of these mails, like fire racing along a train of gunpowder, will 20 be kindling at every instant new successions of burning joy, has an obscure effect of multiplying the victory itself, by multiplying to the imagination into infinity the stages of its progressive diffusion. A fiery arrow seems to be let loose, which from that moment 25 is destined to travel, without intermission, westward for three hundred\* miles—northward for six hundred;

\* "*Three hundred.*"—Of necessity, this scale of measurement, to an American, if he happens to be a thoughtless man, must sound ludicrous. Accordingly, I remember a case in which an 30 American writer indulges himself in the luxury of a little fibbing, by ascribing to an Englishman a pompous account of the Thames, constructed entirely upon American ideas of grandeur, and con-

and the sympathy of our Lombard Street friends at parting is exalted a hundredfold by a sort of visionary sympathy with the yet slumbering sympathies which in so vast a succession we are going to awake.

Liberated from the embarrassments of the city, and 5 issuing into the broad uncrowded avenues of the

cluding in something like these terms: "And, sir, arriving at London, this mighty father of rivers attains a breadth of at least two furlongs, having, in its winding course, traversed the astonishing distance of one hundred and seventy miles." And this the 10 candid American thinks it fair to contrast with the scale of the Mississippi. Now, it is hardly worth while to answer a pure fiction gravely; else one might say that no Englishman out of Bedlam ever thought of looking in an island for the rivers of a continent, nor, consequently, could have thought of looking for the 15 peculiar grandeur of the Thames in the length of its course, or in the extent of soil which it drains. Yet, if he *had* been so absurd, the American might have recollected that a river, not to be compared with the Thames even as to volume of water—viz., the Tiber—has contrived to make itself heard of in this world for 20 twenty-five centuries to an extent not reached as yet by any river, however corpulent, of his own land. The glory of the Thames is measured by the destiny of the population to which it ministers, by the commerce which it supports, by the grandeur of the empire in which, though far from the largest, it is the most influential 25 stream. Upon some such scale, and not by a transfer to Columbian standards, is the course of our English mails to be valued. The American may fancy the effect of his own valuations to our English ears by supposing the case of a Siberian glorifying his country in these terms: "These wretches, sir, in France and 30 England, cannot march half a mile in any direction without finding a house where food can be had and lodging; whereas, such is the noble desolation of our magnificent country that in many a direction for a thousand miles I will engage that a dog shall not find shelter from a snow-storm, nor a wren find an apology for 35 breakfast."

northern suburbs, we soon begin to enter upon our natural pace of ten miles an hour. In the broad light of the summer evening, the sun, perhaps, only just at the point of setting, we are seen from every story of every house. Heads of every age crowd to the windows; young and old understand the language of our victorious symbols; and rolling volleys of sympathizing cheers run along us, behind us, and before us. The beggar, rearing himself against the wall, forgets his lameness,—real or assumed,—thinks not of his whining trade, but stands erect, with bold exulting smiles, as we pass him. The victory has healed him, and says, Be thou whole! Women and children, from garrets alike and cellars, through infinite London, look down or look up with loving eyes upon our gay ribbons and our martial laurels; sometimes kiss their hands; sometimes hang out, as signals of affection, pocket handkerchiefs, aprons, dusters, anything that, by catching the summer breezes, will express an aerial jubilation. On the London side of Barnet, to which we draw near within a few minutes after nine, observe that private carriage which is approaching us. The weather being so warm, the glasses are all down; and one may read, as on the stage of a theater, every thing that goes on within. It contains three ladies—one likely to be “mamma,” and two of seventeen or eighteen, who are probably her daughters. What lovely animation, what beautiful unpremeditated pantomime, explaining to us every syllable that passes, in these ingenuous girls! By the sudden start and raising of the hands on first discovering our laureled equipage, by the sudden movement and appeal to the

elder lady from both of them, and by the heightened color on their animated countenances, we can almost hear them saying, "See, see! Look at their laurels! Oh, mamma! there has been a great battle in Spain; and it has been a great victory." In a moment we 5 are on the point of passing them. We passengers—I on the box, and the two on the roof behind me—raise our hats to the ladies; the coachman makes his professional salute with the whip; the guard even, though punctilious on the matter of his dignity as an 10 officer under the crown, touches his hat. The ladies move to us, in return, with a winning graciousness of gesture; all smile on each side in a way that nobody could misunderstand, and that nothing short of a grand national sympathy could so instantaneously 15 prompt. Will these ladies say that we are nothing to *them*? Oh, no; they will not say *that*! They cannot deny—they do not deny—that for this night they are our sisters; gentle or simple, scholar or illiterate servant, for twelve hours to come, we on the outside 20 have the honor to be their brothers. Those poor women, again, who stop to gaze upon us with delight at the entrance of Barnet, and seem, by their air of weariness, to be returning from labor—do you mean to say that they are washerwomen and charwomen? 25 Oh, my poor friend, you are quite mistaken. I assure you they stand in a far higher rank; for this one night they feel themselves by birthright to be daughters of England, and answer to no humbler title.

Every joy, however, even rapturous joy,—such is 30 the sad law of earth,—may carry with it grief, or fear of grief, to some. Three miles beyond Barnet, we

see approaching us another private carriage, nearly repeating the circumstances of the former case. Here, also, the glasses are all down ; here, also, is an elderly lady seated ; but the two daughters are missing ; for 5 the single young person sitting by the lady's side seems to be an attendant—so I judge from her dress, and her air of respectful reserve. The lady is in mourning ; and her countenance expresses sorrow. At first she does not look up ; so that I believe she is 10 not aware of our approach, until she hears the measured beating of our horses' hoofs. Then she raises her eyes to settle them painfully on our triumphal equipage. Our decorations explain the case to her at once ; but she beholds them with apparent anxiety, 15 or even with terror. Some time before this, I, finding it difficult to hit a flying mark when embarrassed by the coachman's person and reins intervening, had given to the guard a *Courier* evening paper, containing the gazette, for the next carriage that might pass. 20 Accordingly he tossed it in, so folded that the huge capitals expressing some such legend as *glorious victory* might catch the eye at once. To see the paper, however, at all, interpreted as it was by our ensigns of triumph, explained everything ; and, if the guard were 25 right in thinking the lady to have received it with a gesture of horror, it could not be doubtful that she had suffered some deep personal affliction in connection with this Spanish war.

Here, now, was the case of one who, having formerly 30 suffered, might, erroneously perhaps, be distressing herself with anticipations of another similar suffering. That same night, and hardly three hours

later, occurred the reverse case. A poor woman, who too probably would find herself, in a day or two, to have suffered the heaviest of afflictions by the battle, blindly allowed herself to express an exultation so unmeasured in the news and its details as gave to her the appearance which among Celtic Highlanders is called *fey*. This was at some little town where we changed horses an hour or two after midnight. Some fair or wake had kept the people up out of their beds, and had occasioned a partial illumination of the stalls and booths, presenting an unusual but very impressive effect. We saw many lights moving about as we drew near; and perhaps the most striking scene on the whole route was our reception at this place. The flashing of torches and the beautiful radiance of blue lights (technically, Bengal lights) upon the heads of our horses; the fine effect of such a showery and ghostly illumination falling upon our flowers and glittering laurels\*; whilst all around ourselves, that formed a center of light, the darkness gathered on the rear and flanks in massy blackness; these optical splendors, together with the prodigious enthusiasm of the people, composed a picture at once scenical and affecting, theatrical and holy. As we stayed for three or four minutes, I alighted; and immediately from a dismantled stall in the street, where no doubt she had been presiding through the earlier part of the night, advanced eagerly a middle-aged woman. The sight of my newspaper it was that had drawn her attention

\* "*Glittering laurels.*"—I must observe that the color of *green* suffers almost a spiritual change and exaltation under the effect of Bengal lights.

upon myself. The victory which we were carrying down to the provinces on *this* occasion was the imperfect one of Talavera—imperfect for its results, such was the virtual treachery of the Spanish general, 5 Cuesta, but not imperfect in its ever memorable heroism. I told her the main outline of the battle. The agitation of her enthusiasm had been so conspicuous when listening, and when first applying for information, that I could not but ask her if she had 10 not some relative in the Peninsular army. Oh, yes; her only son was there. In what regiment? He was a trooper in the Twenty-third Dragoons. My heart sank within me as she made that answer. This sublime regiment, which an Englishman should never 15 mention without raising his hat to their memory, had made the most memorable and effective charge recorded in military annals. They leaped their horses—*over* a trench where they could; *into* it, and with the result of death or mutilation, when they could 20 *not*. What proportion cleared the trench is nowhere stated. Those who *did* closed up and went down upon the enemy with such divinity of fervor (I use the word *divinity* by design; the inspiration of God must have prompted this movement to those whom 25 even then he was calling to his presence) that two results followed. As regarded the enemy, this Twenty-third Dragoons, not, I believe, originally three hundred and fifty strong, paralyzed a French column six thousand strong, then ascended the hill, and fixed 30 the gaze of the whole French army. As regarded themselves, the Twenty-third were supposed at first to have been barely not annihilated; but eventually, I

believe, about one in four survived. And this, then, was the regiment—a regiment already for some hours glorified and hallowed to the ear of all London, as lying stretched, by a large majority, upon one bloody aceldama—in which the young trooper served whose mother was now talking in a spirit of such joyous enthusiasm. Did I tell her the truth? Had I the heart to break up her dreams? No. To-morrow, said I to myself—to-morrow, or the next day, will publish the worst. For one night more wherefore should she not sleep in peace? After to-morrow the chances are too many that peace will forsake her pillow. This brief respite, then, let her owe to *my* gift and *my* forbearance. But, if I told her not of the bloody price that had been paid, not therefore was I silent on the contributions from her son's regiment to that day's service and glory. I showed her not the funeral banners under which the noble regiment was sleeping. I lifted not the overshadowing laurels from the bloody trench in which horse and rider lay mangled together. But I told her how these dear children of England, officers and privates, had leaped their horses over all obstacles as gayly as hunters to the morning's chase. I told her how they rode their horses into the mists of death—saying to myself, but not saying to *her*, “and laid down their young lives for thee, O Mother England! as willingly—poured out their noble blood as cheerfully—as ever, after a long day's sport, when infants, they had rested their wearied heads upon their mother's knees, or had sunk to sleep in her arms.” Strange it is, yet true, that she seemed to have no fears for her son's safety, even



after this knowledge that the Twenty-third Dragoons had been memorably engaged ; but so much was she enraptured by the knowledge that *his* regiment, and therefore that *he*, had rendered conspicuous service in  
5 the dreadful conflict—a service which had actually made them, within the last twelve hours, the foremost topic of conversation in London—so absolutely was fear swallowed up in joy—that in the mere simplicity of her fervent nature, the poor woman threw her arms  
10 round my neck, as she thought of her son, and gave to *me* the kiss which secretly was meant for *him*.

## SECTION II—THE VISION OF SUDDEN DEATH.

What is to be taken as the predominant opinion of man, reflective and philosophic, upon *sudden death* ?  
15 It is remarkable that, in different conditions of society, sudden death has been variously regarded as the consummation of an earthly career most fervently to be desired, or again, as that consummation which is with most horror to be deprecated. Cæsar the Dictator, at  
20 his last dinner party (*cæna*), on the very evening before his assassination, when the minutes of his earthly career were numbered, being asked what death in *his* judgment, might be pronounced the most eligible, replied, "That which should be most sudden." On  
25 the other hand, the divine Litany of our English Church, when breathing forth supplications, as if in some representative character, for the whole human race prostrate before God, places such a death in the very van of horrors : "From lightning and tempest ;  
30 from plague, pestilence, and famine ; from battle and

murder and from *sudden death*—*Good Lord, deliver us.*” Sudden death is here made to crown the climax in a grand ascent of calamities ; it is ranked among the last of curses ; and yet by the noblest of Romans it was ranked as the first of blessings. In that difference most readers will see little more than the essential difference between Christianity and Paganism. But this, on consideration, I doubt. The Christian Church may be right in its estimate of sudden death ; and it is a natural feeling, though after all it may also 10 be an infirm one, to wish for a quiet dismissal from life, as that which *seems* most reconcilable with meditation, with penitential retrospects, and with the humilities of farewell prayer. There does not, however, occur to me any direct scriptural warrant for 15 this earnest petition of the English Litany, unless under a special construction of the word “sudden.” It seems a petition indulged rather and conceded to human infirmity than exacted from human piety. It is not so much a doctrine built upon the eternities of the 20 Christian system as a plausible opinion built upon special varieties of physical temperament. Let that, however, be as it may, two remarks suggest themselves as prudent restraints upon a doctrine which else *may* wander, and *has* wandered, into an uncharitable superstition. The first is this : that many people are likely to exaggerate the horror of a sudden death from the disposition to lay a false stress upon words or acts simply because by an accident they have become *final* words or acts. If a man dies, for instance, by some 30 sudden death when he happens to be intoxicated, such a death is falsely regarded with peculiar horror ; as

though the intoxication were suddenly exalted into a blasphemy. But *that* is unphilosophic. The man was, or he was not, *habitually* a drunkard. If not, if his intoxication were a solitary accident, there can be  
5 no reason for allowing special emphasis to this act simply because through misfortune it became his final act. Nor, on the other hand, if it were no accident, but one of his *habitual* transgressions, will it be the more habitual or the more a transgression because  
10 some sudden calamity, surprising him, has caused this habitual transgression to be also a final one. Could the man have had any reason even dimly to foresee his own sudden death, there would have been a new feature in his act of intemperance—a feature of pre-  
15 sumption and irreverence, as one that, having known himself drawing near to the presence of God, should have suited his demeanor to an expectation so awful. But this is no part of the case supposed. And the only new element in the man's act is not any element  
20 of special immorality, but simply of special misfortune.

The other remark has reference to the meaning of the word *sudden*. Very possibly Cæsar and the Christian Church do not differ in the way supposed—that  
25 is do not differ by any difference of doctrine as between Pagan and Christian views of the moral temper appropriate to death ; but perhaps they are contemplating different cases. Both contemplate a violent death, a *Biaðavatos*—death that is *βιαίος*, or in  
30 other words, death that is brought about, not by internal and spontaneous change, but by active force having its origin from without. In this meaning the two

authorities agree. Thus far they are in harmony. But the difference is that the Roman by the word "sudden" means *unlingering*, whereas the Christian Litany by "sudden death" means a death *without warning*, consequently without any available summons 5 to religious preparation. The poor mutineer who kneels down to gather into his heart the bullets from twelve firelocks of his pitying comrades dies by a most sudden death, in Cæsar's sense ; one shock, one mighty spasm, one (possibly *not* one) groan, and all is over. 10 But, in the sense of the Litany, the mutineer's death is far from sudden ; his offense originally, his imprisonment, his trial, the interval between his sentence and its execution, having all furnished him with separate warnings of his fate—having all summoned him to 15 meet it with solemn preparation.

Here at once, in this sharp verbal distinction, we comprehend the faithful earnestness with which a holy Christian Church pleads on behalf of her poor departing children that God would vouchsafe to them 20 the last great privilege and distinction possible, on a deathbed, viz., the opportunity of untroubled preparation for facing this mighty trial. Sudden death, as a mere variety in the modes of dying where death in some shape is inevitable, proposes a question of 25 choice which, equally in the Roman and the Christian sense, will be variously answered according to each man's variety of temperament. Meantime, one aspect of sudden death there is, one modification, upon which no doubt can arise, that of all martyrdoms it is 30 the most agitating—viz., where it surprises a man under circumstances which offer (or which seem to

offer) some hurrying, flying, inappreciably minute chance of evading it. Sudden as the danger which it affronts must be any effort by which such an evasion can be accomplished. Even *that*, even the sickening  
5 necessity for hurrying in extremity where all hurry seems destined to be vain—even that anguish is liable to a hideous exasperation in one particular case, viz., where the appeal is made not exclusively to the instinct of self-preservation, but to the conscience, on  
10 behalf of some other life besides your own, accidentally thrown upon *your* protection. To fail, to collapse in a service merely your own, might seem comparatively venial ; though, in fact, it is far from venial. But to fail in a case where Providence has suddenly thrown  
15 into your hands the final interests of another—a fellow-creature shuddering between the gates of life and death ; this, to a man of apprehensive conscience, would mingle the misery of an atrocious criminality with the misery of a bloody calamity. You are  
20 called upon, by the case supposed, possibly to die, but to die at the very moment when, by any even partial failure or effeminate collapse of your energies, you will be self-denounced as a murderer. You had but the twinkling of an eye for your effort, and that  
25 effort might have been unavailing ; but to have risen to the level of such an effort would have rescued you, though not from dying, yet from dying as a traitor to your final and farewell duty.

The situation here contemplated exposes a dreadful  
30 ulcer, lurking far down in the depths of human nature. It is not that men generally are summoned to face such awful trials. But potentially, and in

shadowy outline, such a trial is moving subterraneously in perhaps all men's natures. Upon the secret mirror of our dreams such a trial is darkly projected, perhaps, to every one of us. That dream, so familiar to childhood, of meeting a lion, and, through languishing prostration in hope and the energies of hope, that constant sequel of lying down before the lion, publishes the secret frailty of human nature—reveals its deep-seated falsehood to itself—records its abysmal treachery. Perhaps not one of us escapes that dream; 10 perhaps, as by some sorrowful doom of man, that dream repeats for every one of us, through every generation, the original temptation in Eden. Every one of us, in this dream, has a bait offered to the infirm places of his own individual will; once again 15 a snare is presented for tempting him into captivity to a luxury of ruin; once again, as in aboriginal Paradise, the man falls by his own choice; again, by infinite iteration, the ancient earth groans to heaven, through her secret caves, over the weakness of her 20 child. "Nature, from her seat, sighing through all her works," again "gives signs of woe that all is lost"; and again the counter-sigh is repeated to the sorrowing heavens for the endless rebellion against God. It is not without probability that in the world 25 of dreams every one of us ratifies for himself the original transgression. In dreams, perhaps under some secret conflict of the midnight sleeper, lighted up to the consciousness at the time, but darkened to the memory as soon as all is finished, each several 30 child of our mysterious race completes for himself the treason of the aboriginal fall.

The incident, so memorable in itself by its features of horror, and so scenical by its grouping for the eye, which furnished the text for this reverie upon *Sudden Death*, occurred to myself in the dead of night, as  
5 a solitary spectator, when seated on the box of the Manchester and Glasgow mail, in the second or third summer after Waterloo. I find it necessary to relate the circumstances, because they are such as could not have occurred unless under a singular combination of  
10 accidents. In those days, the oblique and lateral communications with many rural post offices were so arranged, either through necessity or through defect of system, as to make it requisite for the main north-western mail (*i. e.*, the *down* mail) on reaching Man-  
15 chester to halt for a number of hours ; how many, I do not remember ; six or seven, I think ; but the result was that, in the ordinary course, the mail recommenced its journey northward about midnight. Wearied with the long detention at a gloomy hotel, I  
20 walked out about eleven o'clock at night for the sake of fresh air ; meaning to fall in with the mail and resume my seat at the post office. The night, however, being yet dark, as the moon had scarcely risen, and the streets being at that hour empty, so as to offer no  
25 opportunities for asking the road, I lost my way, and did not reach the post office until it was considerably past midnight ; but, to my great relief (as it was important for me to be in Westmoreland by the morning) I saw in the huge saucer eyes of the mail, blazing  
30 through the gloom, an evidence that my chance was not yet lost. Past the time it was ; but, by some rare accident, the mail was not even yet ready to

start. I ascended to my seat on the box, where my cloak was still lying as it had lain at the Bridgewater Arms. I had left it there in imitation of a nautical discoverer, who leaves a bit of bunting on the shore of his discovery, by way of warning off the ground the whole human race, and notifying to the Christian and the heathen worlds, with his best compliments, that he has hoisted his pocket handkerchief once and forever upon that virgin soil ; thenceforward claiming the *jus dominii* to the top of the atmosphere above it, and also the right of driving shafts to the center of the earth below it ; so that all people found after this warning either aloft in upper chambers of the atmosphere, or groping in subterraneous shafts, or squatting audaciously on the surface of the soil, will be treated as trespassers—kicked, that is to say, or decapitated, as circumstances may suggest, by their very faithful servant, the owner of the said pocket handkerchief. In the present case it is probable that my cloak might not have been respected, and the *jus gentium* might have been cruelly violated in my person—for, in the dark, people commit deeds of darkness, gas being a great ally of morality ; but it so happened that on this night there was no other outside passenger ; and thus the crime, which else was but too probable, missed fire for want of a criminal.

Having mounted the box, I took a small quantity of laudanum, having already traveled two hundred and fifty miles—viz., from a point seventy miles beyond London. In the taking of laudanum there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident it drew upon me the special attention of my assessor on the



box, the coachman. And in *that* also there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident, and with great delight, it drew my own attention to the fact that this coachman was a monster in point of bulk, and that he  
5 had but one eye. In fact, he had been foretold by Vergil as

Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.

He answered to the conditions in every one of the items : 1, a monster he was ; 2, dreadful ; 3, shapeless ; 4, huge ; 5, who had lost an eye. But why  
10 should *that* delight me ? Had he been one of the Calenders in the "Arabian Nights," and had paid down his eye as the price of his criminal curiosity, what right had *I* to exult in his misfortune ? I did *not*  
15 exult ; I delighted in no man's punishment, though it were even merited. But these personal distinctions (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) identified in an instant an old friend of mine whom I had known in the south for some years as the most masterly of mail-coachmen.  
20 He was the man in all Europe that could (if *any* could) have driven six-in-hand full gallop over *Al Sirat*—that dreadful bridge of Mohammed, with no side battlements, and of *extra* room not enough for a razor's edge—leading right across the bottomless gulf.  
25 Under this eminent man, whom in Greek I cognominated Cyclops *Diphrelates* (Cyclops the Charioteer), I, and others known to me, studied the diphrelatic art. Excuse, reader, a word too elegant to be pedantic. As a pupil, though I paid extra fees, it is to be  
30 lamented that I did not stand high in his esteem. It showed his dogged honesty (though, observe, not his

discernment) that he could not see my merits. Let us excuse his absurdity in this particular by remembering his want of an eye. Doubtless *that* made him blind to my merits. In the art of conversation, however, he admitted that I had the whip-hand of him. On this 5 present occasion great joy was at our meeting. But what was Cyclops doing here? Had the medical men recommended northern air, or how? I collected, from such explanations as he volunteered, that he had an interest at stake in some suit at law now pending 10 at Lancaster; so that probably he had got himself transferred to this station for the purpose of connecting with his professional pursuits an instant readiness for the calls of his lawsuit.

Meantime, what are we stopping for? Surely we 15 have now waited long enough. Oh, this procrastinating mail, and this procrastinating post office! Can't they take a lesson upon that subject from *me*? Some people have called *me* procrastinating. Yet you are witness, reader, that I was here kept waiting for the 20 post office. Will the post office lay its hand on its heart, in its moments of sobriety, and assert that ever it waited for me? What are they about? The guard tells me that there is a large extra accumulation of foreign mails this night, owing to irregularities caused 25 by war, by wind, by weather, in the packet service, which as yet does not benefit at all by steam. For an *extra* hour, it seems, the post office has been engaged in threshing out the pure wheaten correspondence of Glasgow, and winnowing it from the chaff of all baser 30 intermediate towns. But at last all is finished. Sound your horn, guard! Manchester, good-by! we've

lost an hour by your criminal conduct at the post office ; which, however, though I do not mean to part with a serviceable ground of complaint, and one which really *is* such for the horses, to me secretly is an  
5 advantage, since it compels us to look sharply for this lost hour among the next eight or nine, and to recover it (if we can) at the rate of one mile extra per hour. Off we are at last, and at eleven miles an hour ; and for the moment I detect no changes in the energy or  
10 in the skill of Cyclops.

From Manchester to Kendal, which virtually (though not in law) is the capital of Westmoreland, there were at this time seven stages of eleven miles each. The first five of these, counting from Manchester, terminate  
15 in Lancaster ; which is therefore fifty-five miles north of Manchester, and the same distance exactly from Liverpool. The first three stages terminate in Preston (called by way of distinction from other towns of that name, *Proud* Preston) ; at which place it is that the  
20 separate roads from Liverpool and from Manchester to the north become confluent.\* Within these first three stages lay the foundation, the progress, and termination of our night's adventure. During the first stage I found out that Cyclops was mortal ; he  
25 was liable to the shocking affection of sleep—a thing

\* "*Confluent*."—Suppose a capital Y (the Pythagorean letter): Lancaster is at the foot of this letter ; Liverpool at the top of the  
*right* branch ; Manchester at the top of the *left* ; Proud Preston  
30 at the center, where the two branches unite. It is thirty-three miles along either of the two branches ; it is twenty-two miles along the stem—viz., from Preston in the middle to Lancaster at the foot. There's a lesson in geography for the reader !

which previously I had never suspected. If a man indulges in the vicious habit of sleeping, all the skill in aurigation of Apollo himself, with the horses of Aurora to execute his notions, avails him nothing. "O Cyclops!" I exclaimed, "thou art mortal. 5 My friend, thou snoorest." Through the first eleven miles, however, this infirmity—which I grieve to say that he shared with the whole Pagan Pantheon—betrayed itself only by brief snatches. On waking up, he made an apology for himself which, instead of 10 mending matters, laid open a gloomy vista of coming disasters. The summer assizes, he reminded me, were now going on at Lancaster; in consequence of which, for three nights and three days he had not lain down in a bed. During the day he was waiting for his own 15 summons as a witness on the trial in which he was interested, or else, lest he should be missing at the critical moment, was drinking with the other witnesses under the pastoral surveillance of the attorneys. During the night, or that part of it which at sea would 20 form the middle watch, he was driving. This explanation certainly accounted for his drowsiness, but in a way which made it much more alarming; since now, after several days' resistance to this infirmity, at length he was steadily giving way. Throughout 25 the second stage he grew more and more drowsy. In the second mile of the third stage he surrendered himself finally, and without a struggle, to his perilous temptation. All his past resistance had but deepened the weight of this final oppression. Seven atmos- 30 pheres of sleep rested upon him; and, to consummate the case, our worthy guard, after singing "Love among

the Roses" for perhaps thirty times, without invitation and without applause, had in revenge moodily resigned himself to slumber—not so deep, doubtless, as the coachman's, but deep enough for mischief.

5 And thus at last, about ten miles from Preston, it came about that I found myself left in charge of his majesty's London and Glasgow mail, then running at the least twelve miles an hour.

What made this negligence less criminal than else

10 it must have been thought was the condition of the roads at night during the assizes. At that time, all the law business of populous Liverpool, and also of populous Manchester, with its vast cincture of populous rural districts, was called up by ancient usage to

15 the tribunal of Lilliputian Lancaster. To break up this old traditional usage required, 1, a conflict with powerful established interests, 2, a large system of new arrangements, and 3, a new parliamentary statute. But as yet this change was merely in contemplation.

20 As things were at present, twice in the year\* so vast a body of business rolled northward from the southern quarter of the county that, for a fortnight at least, it occupied the severe exertions of two judges in its dispatch. The consequence of this was that every

25 horse available for such a service, along the whole line of road, was exhausted in carrying down the multitudes of people who were parties to the different suits. By sunset, therefore, it usually happened that, through utter exhaustion among men and horses,

30 \* "*Twice in the year.*"—There were at that time only two assizes even in the most populous counties—viz., the Lent Assizes and the Summer Assizes.

the road sank into profound silence. Except the exhaustion in the vast adjacent county of York from a contested election, no such silence succeeding to no such fiery uproar was ever witnessed in England.

On this occasion the usual silence and solitude 5 prevailed along the road. Not a hoof nor a wheel was to be heard. And, to strengthen this false luxurious confidence in the noiseless roads, it happened also that the night was one of peculiar solemnity and peace. For my own part, though slightly alive to 10 the possibilities of peril, I had so far yielded to the influence of the mighty calm as to sink into a profound reverie. The month was August; in the middle of which lay my own birthday—a festival to every thoughtful man suggesting solemn and often 15 sigh-born\* thoughts. The county was my own native county—upon which, in its southern section, more than upon any equal area known to man past or present, had descended the original curse of labor in its heaviest form, not mastering the bodies only of 20 men, as of slaves, or criminals in mines, but working through the fiery will. Upon no equal space of earth was, or ever had been, the same energy of human power put forth daily. At this particular season also of the assizes, that dreadful hurricane of flight 25 and pursuit, as it might have seemed to a stranger, which swept to and from Lancaster all day long, hunting the county up and down, and regularly subsiding back into silence about sunset, could not fail

\* "*Sigh-born*."—I owe the suggestion of this word to an obscure 30 remembrance of a beautiful phrase in Giraldus Cambrensis—viz., *suspiriosa cogitationes*.

(when united with this permanent distinction of Lancashire as the very metropolis and citadel of labor) to point the thoughts pathetically upon that counter-  
vision of rest, of saintly repose from strife and sorrow,  
5 towards which, as to their secret haven, the profounder aspirations of man's heart are in solitude continually traveling. Obliquely upon our left we were nearing the sea ; which also must, under the present circumstances, be repeating the general state of halcyon  
10 repose. The sea, the atmosphere, the light, bore each an orchestral part in this universal lull. Moonlight and the first timid tremblings of the dawn were by this time blending ; and the blendings were brought into a still more exquisite state of unity by a slight  
15 silvery mist, motionless and dreamy, that covered the woods and fields, but with a veil of equable transparency. Except the feet of our own horses—which, running on a sandy margin of the road, made but little disturbance—there was no sound abroad. In  
20 the clouds and on the earth prevailed the same majestic peace ; and, in spite of all that the villain of a schoolmaster has done for the ruin of our sublimer thoughts, which are the thoughts of our infancy, we still believe in no such nonsense as a limited atmos-  
25 phere. Whatever we may swear with our false feigning lips, in our faithful hearts we still believe, and must forever believe, in fields of air traversing the total gulf between earth and the central heavens. Still, in the confidence of children that tread without  
30 fear *every* chamber in their father's house, and to whom no door is closed, we, in that Sabbatic vision which sometimes is revealed for an hour upon nights like

this, ascend with easy steps from the sorrow-stricken fields of earth upward to the sandals of God.

Suddenly, from thoughts like these I was awakened to a sullen sound, as of some motion on the distant road. It stole upon the air for a moment ; I listened 5 in awe ; but then it died away. Once roused, however, I could not but observe with alarm the quickened motion of our horses. Ten years' experience had made my eye learned in the valuing of motion ; and I saw that we were now running thirteen miles an hour. I 10 pretend to no presence of mind. On the contrary, my fear is that I am miserably and shamefully deficient in that quality as regards action. The palsy of doubt and distraction hangs like some guilty weight of dark unfathomed remembrances upon my energies when the 15 signal is flying for *action*. But, on the other hand, this accursed gift I have, as regards *thought*, that in the first step toward the possibility of a misfortune I see its total evolution ; in the radix of the series I see too certainly and too instantly its entire expansion ; in the 20 first syllable of the dreadful sentence I read already the last. It was not that I feared for ourselves. *Us* our bulk and impetus charmed against peril in any collision. And I had ridden through too many hundreds of perils that were frightful to approach, that 25 were matter of laughter to look back upon ; the first face of which was horror, the parting face a jest—for any anxiety to rest upon *our* interests. The mail was not built, I felt assured, nor bespoke, that could betray *me* who trusted to its protection. But any 30 carriage that we could meet would be frail and light in comparison of ourselves. And I remarked this



ominous accident of our situation—we were on the wrong side of the road. But then, it may be said, the other party, if other there was, might also be on the wrong side ; and two wrongs might make a right.

5 *That* was not likely. The same motive which had drawn *us* to the right-hand side of the road—viz., the luxury of the soft beaten sand as contrasted with the paved center—would prove attractive to others. The two adverse carriages would, therefore, to a certainty, be

10 traveling on the same side ; and from this side, as not being ours in law, the crossing over to the other would, of course, be looked for from *us*.<sup>\*</sup> Our lamps, still lighted, would give the impression of vigilance on our part. And every creature that met us would rely

15 upon *us* for quartering.<sup>†</sup> All this, and if the separate links of the anticipation had been a thousand times more, I saw, not discursively, or by effort, or by succession, but by one flash of horrid simultaneous intuition.

20 Under this steady though rapid anticipation of the evil which *might* be gathering ahead, ah ! what a sullen mystery of fear, what a sigh of woe, was that which stole upon the air, as again the far-off sound of a wheel was heard ! A whisper it was—a whisper

25 from, perhaps, four miles 'off—secretly announcing a

\* It is true that, according to the law of the case as established by legal precedents, all carriages were required to give way before royal equipages, and therefore before the mail as one of them. But this only increased the danger, as being a regulation very imperfectly made known, very unequally enforced, and therefore often embarrassing the movements on both sides.

† “*Quartering*.”—This is the technical word, and, I presume, derived from the French *cartayer*, to evade a rut or any obstacle.

ruin that, being foreseen, was not the less inevitable ; that, being known, was not therefore healed. What could be done—who was it that could do it—to check the storm-flight of these maniacal horses ? Could I not seize the reins from the grasp of the slumbering 5 coachman ? You, reader, think that it would have been in *your* power to do so. And I quarrel not with your estimate of yourself. But, from the way in which the coachman's hand was viced between his upper and lower thigh, this was impossible. Easy, 10 was it ? See, then, that bronze equestrian statue. The cruel rider has kept the bit in his horse's mouth for two centuries. Unbridle him for a minute, if you please, and wash his mouth with water. Easy, was it ? Unhorse me, then, that imperial rider ; knock me 15 those marble feet from those marble stirrups of Charlemagne.

The sounds ahead strengthened, and were now too clearly the sounds of wheels. Who and what could it be ? Was it industry in a taxed cart ? Was it youth- 20 ful gayety in a gig ? Was it sorrow that loitered, or joy that raced ? For as yet the snatches of sound were too intermitting, from distance, to decipher the character of the motion. Whoever were the travelers, something must be done to warn them. Upon the 25 other party rests the active responsibility, but upon *us*—and, woe is me ! that *us* was reduced to my frail opium-shattered self—rests the responsibility of warning. Yet, how should this be accomplished ? Might I not sound the guard's horn ? Already, on the first 30 thought, I was making my way over the roof to the guard's seat. But this, from the accident which I

have mentioned, of the foreign mails being piled upon the roof, was a difficult and even dangerous attempt to one cramped by nearly three hundred miles of outside traveling. And, fortunately, before I had lost 5 much time in the attempt, our frantic horses swept round an angle of the road which opened upon us that final stage where the collision must be accomplished and the catastrophe sealed. All was apparently finished. The court was sitting; the case was 10 heard; the judge had finished; and only the verdict was yet in arrear.

Before us lay an avenue straight as an arrow, six hundred yards, perhaps, in length; and the umbrageous trees, which rose in a regular line from either 15 side, meeting high overhead, gave to it the character of a cathedral aisle. These trees lent a deeper solemnity to the early light; but there was still light enough to perceive, at the further end of this Gothic aisle, a frail reedy gig, in which were seated a young man, 20 and by his side a young lady. Ah, young sir! what are you about? If it is requisite that you should whisper your communications to this young lady,—though really I see nobody, at an hour and on a road so solitary, likely to overhear you,—is it therefore 25 requisite that you should carry your lips forward to hers? The little carriage is creeping on at one mile an hour; and the parties within it, being thus tenderly engaged, are naturally bending down their heads. Between them and eternity, to all human calculation, 30 there is but a minute and a half. Oh, Heavens! what is it that I shall do? Speaking or acting, what help can I offer? Strange it is, and to a mere auditor of

the tale might seem laughable, that I should need a suggestion from the Iliad to prompt the sole resource that remained. Yet so it was. Suddenly I remembered the shout of Achilles, and its effect. But could I pretend to shout like the son of Peleus, aided by 5 Pallas? No ; but then I needed not the shout that should alarm all Asia militant ; such a shout would suffice as might carry terror into the hearts of two thoughtless young people and one gig-horse. I shouted—and the young man heard me not. A 10 second time I shouted—and now he heard me, for now he raised his head.

Here, then, all had been done that, by me, *could* be done ; more on *my* part was not possible. Mine had been the first step ; the second was for the young 15 man ; the third was for God. If, said I, this stranger is a brave man, and if indeed he loves the young girl at his side—or, loving her not, if he feels the obligation, pressing upon every man worthy to be called a man, of doing his utmost for a woman confided to his 20 protection—he will at least make some effort to save her. If *that* fails, he will not perish the more, or by a death more cruel, for having made it ; and he will die as a brave man should, with his face to the danger, and with his arm about the woman that he sought in 25 vain to save. But if he makes no effort—shrinking without a struggle from his duty—he himself will not the less certainly perish for this baseness of poltroonery. He will die no less ; and why not ? Wherefore should we grieve that there is one craven less in 30 the world ? No ; *let* him perish, without a pitying thought of ours wasted upon him ; and, in that case,

all our grief will be reserved for the fate of the helpless girl who now, upon the least shadow of failure in *him*, must by the fiercest of translations—must without time for a prayer—must within seventy seconds—  
5 stand before the judgment-seat of God.

But craven he was not ; sudden had been the call upon him, and sudden was his answer to the call. He saw, he heard, he comprehended, the ruin that was coming down ; already its gloomy shadow darkened  
10 above him ; and already he was measuring his strength to deal with it. Ah ! what a vulgar thing does courage seem when we see nations buying it and selling it for a shilling a day. Ah ! what a sublime thing does  
15 courage seem when some fearful summons on the great deep of life carries a man, as if running before a hurricane, up to the giddy crest of some tumultuous crisis from which lie two courses, and a voice says to him audibly, " One way lies hope ; take the other, and  
20 mourn forever ! " How grand a triumph if, even then, amidst the raving of all around him, and the frenzy of the danger, the man is able to confront his situation—is able to retire for a moment into solitude with God, and to seek his counsel from *him* !

For seven seconds, it might be, of his seventy, the  
25 stranger settled his countenance steadfastly upon us, as if to search and value every element in the conflict before him. For five seconds more of his seventy he sat immovably, like one that mused on some great purpose. For five more, perhaps, he sat with eyes  
30 upraised, like one that prayed in sorrow, under some extremity of doubt, for light that should guide him to the better choice. Then suddenly he rose ; stood

upright ; and, by a powerful strain upon the reins, raising his horse's fore feet from the ground, he slewed him round on the pivot of his hind legs, so as to plant the little equipage in a position nearly at right angles to ours. Thus far his condition was not improved, except as a first step had been taken towards the possibility of a second. If no more were done, nothing was done ; for the little carriage still occupied the very center of our path, though in an altered direction. Yet even now it may not be too late ; fifteen of the seventy seconds may still be unexhausted ; and one almighty bound may avail to clear the ground. Hurry, then, hurry ! for the flying moments—*they* hurry. Oh, hurry, hurry, my brave young man ! for the cruel hoofs of our horses—*they* also hurry ! Fast are the flying moments, faster are the hoofs of our horses. But fear not for *him*, if human energy can suffice ; faithful was he that drove to his terrific duty ; faithful was the horse to *his* command. One blow, one impulse given with voice and hand, by the stranger, one rush from the horse, one bound as if in the act of rising to a fence, landed the docile creature's fore feet upon the crown or arching center of the road. The larger half of the little equipage had then cleared our overtowering shadow : *that* was evident even to my own agitated sight. But it mattered little that one wreck should float off in safety, if upon the wreck that perished were embarked the human freightage. The rear part of the carriage—was *that* certainly beyond the line of absolute ruin ? What power could answer the question ? Glance of eye, thought of man, wing of angel, which

of these had speed enough to sweep between the question and the answer, and divide the one from the other? Light does not tread upon the steps of light more indivisibly than did our all-conquering arrival upon the escaping efforts of the gig. *That* must the young man have felt too plainly. His back was now turned to us ; not by sight could he any longer communicate with the peril ; but, by the dreadful rattle of our harness, too truly had his ear been instructed that all was finished as regarded any effort of *his*. Already in resignation he had rested from his struggle ; and perhaps in his heart he was whispering, " Father, which art in heaven, do thou finish above what I on earth have attempted." Faster than ever mill-race we ran past them in our inexorable flight. Oh, raving of hurricanes that must have sounded in their young ears at the moment of our transit ! Even in that moment the thunder of collision spoke aloud. Either with the swingle-bar, or with the haunch of our near leader, we had struck the off-wheel of the little gig ; which stood rather obliquely, and not quite so far advanced as to be accurately parallel with the near wheel. The blow from the fury of our passage resounded terrifically. I rose in horror, to gaze upon the ruins we might have caused. From my elevated station I looked down, and looked back upon the scene ; which in a moment told its own tale, and wrote all its records on my heart forever.

Here was the map of the passion that now had finished. The horse was planted immovably, with his fore feet upon the paved crest of the central road. He of the whole party might be supposed untouched

by the passion of death. The little cany carriage—partly, perhaps, from the violent torsion of the wheels in its recent movement, partly from the thundering blow we had given to it—as if it sympathized with human horror, was all alive with tremblings and 5 shiverings. The young man trembled not, nor shivered. He sat like a rock. But *his* was the steadiness of agitation frozen into rest by horror. As yet he dared not to look round ; for he knew that, if anything remained to do, by him it could no longer be 10 done. And as yet he knew not for certain if their safety were accomplished. But the lady—

But the lady—Oh, Heavens ! will that spectacle ever depart from my dreams, as she rose and sank upon her seat, sank and rose, threw up her arms 15 wildly to heaven, clutched at some visionary object in the air, fainting, praying, raving, despairing ? Figure to yourself, reader, the elements of the case ; suffer me to recall before your mind the circumstances of that unparalleled situation. From the silence and 20 deep peace of this saintly summer night—from the pathetic blending of this sweet moonlight, dawnlight, dreamlight—from the manly tenderness of this flattering, whispering, murmuring love—suddenly as from the woods and fields—suddenly as from the chambers 25 of the air opening in revelation—suddenly as from the ground yawning at her feet, leaped upon her, with the flashing of cataracts, Death the crowned phantom, with all the equipage of his terrors, and the tiger roar of his voice.

The moments were numbered ; the strife was 30 finished ; the vision was closed. In the twinkling of



an eye, our flying horses had carried us to the termination of the umbrageous aisle ; at the right angles we wheeled into our former direction ; the turn of the road carried the scene out of my eyes in an instant, and swept it into my dreams forever.

## SECTION III—DREAM-FUGUE :

FOUNDED ON THE PRECEDING THEME OF SUDDEN  
DEATH.

Whence the sound

10      Of instruments, that made melodious chime,  
Was heard, of harp and organ ; and who moved  
Their stops and chords was seen ; his volent touch  
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,  
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.

15      *Par. Lost, bk. xi.*

*Tumultuosissimamente.*

PASSION of sudden death ! that once in youth I read and interpreted by the shadows of thy averted signs ! \* rapture of panic taking the shape (which among  
20 tombs in churches I have seen) of woman bursting her sepulchral bonds—of woman's Ionic form bending forward from the ruins of her grave with arching foot, with eyes upraised, with clasped adoring hands—waiting, watching, trembling, praying for the trumpet's  
25 call to rise from dust forever ! Ah, vision too fearful

\* “ *Averted signs.* ”—I read the course and changes of the lady's agony in the succession of her involuntary gestures ; but it must be remembered that I read all this from the rear, never once catching the lady's full face, and even her profile imperfectly.

of shuddering humanity on the brink of almighty  
abysses ! vision that didst start back, that didst reel  
away, like a shriveling scroll from before the wrath of  
fire racing on the wings of the wind ! Epilepsy so  
brief of horror, wherefore is it that thou canst not 5  
die ? Passing so suddenly into darkness, wherefore  
is it that still thou sheddest thy sad funeral blights  
upon the gorgeous mosaics of dreams ? Fragment of  
music too passionate, heard once, and heard no more,  
what aileth thee, that thy deep rolling chords come up 10  
at intervals through all the worlds of sleep, and, after  
forty years, have lost no element of horror ?

## I

Lo, it is summer—almighty summer ! The ever-  
lasting gates of life and summer are thrown open 15  
wide ; and on the ocean, tranquil and verdant as a  
savanna, the unknown lady from the dreadful vision  
and I myself are floating—she upon a fairy pinnacle,  
and I upon an English three-decker. Both of us are  
wooing gales of festal happiness within the domain of 20  
our common country, within that ancient watery park,  
within the pathless chase of ocean, where England  
takes her pleasure as a huntress through winter and  
summer, from the rising to the setting sun. Ah,  
what a wilderness of floral beauty was hidden, or was 25  
suddenly revealed, upon the tropic islands through  
which the pinnacle moved ! And upon her deck what  
a bevy of human flowers ; young women how lovely,  
young men how noble, that were dancing together,

and slowly drifting toward us amid music and incense, amid blossoms from forests and gorgeous corymbi from vintages, amid natural caroling and the echoes of sweet girlish laughter. Slowly the pinnacle  
5 nears us, gayly she hails us, and silently she disappears beneath the shadow of our mighty bows. But then, as at some signal from heaven, the music, and the carols, and the sweet echoing of girlish laughter—all are hushed. What evil has smitten the pinnacle,  
10 meeting or overtaking her? Did ruin to our friends couch within our own dreadful shadow? Was our shadow the shadow of death? I looked over the bow for an answer, and behold! the pinnacle was dismantled; the revel and the revelers were found no  
15 more; the glory of the vintage was dust, and the forests with their beauty were left without a witness upon the seas. "But where"—and I turned to our crew—"where are the lovely women that danced beneath the awning of flowers and clustering corymbi?  
20 Whither have fled the noble young men that danced with *them*?" Answer there was none. But suddenly the man at the masthead, whose countenance darkened with alarm, cried out, "Sail on the weather beam! Down she comes upon us; in seventy seconds  
25 she also will founder."

## II.

I looked to the weather side, and the summer had departed. The sea was rocking, and shaken with gathering wrath. Upon its surface sat mighty mists,  
30 which grouped themselves into arches and long

cathedral aisles. Down one of these, with the fiery  
pace of a quarrel from a crossbow, ran a frigate right  
athwart our course. "Are they mad?" some voice  
exclaimed from our deck. "Do they woo their  
ruin?" But in a moment, as she was close upon us, 5  
some impulse of a heady current or local vortex gave  
a wheeling bias to her course, and off she forged with-  
out a shock. As she ran past us, high aloft among  
the shrouds stood the lady of the pinnacle. The deeps  
opened ahead in malice to receive her, towering surges 10  
of foam ran after her, the billows were fierce to catch  
her. But far away she was borne into desert spaces  
of the sea; while still by sight I followed her, as she  
ran before the howling gale, chased by angry seabirds  
and by maddening billows; still I saw her, as at the 15  
moment when she ran past us, standing among the  
shrouds, with her white draperies streaming before the  
wind. There she stood, with hair disheveled, one  
hand clutched among the tackling—rising, sinking,  
fluttering, trembling, praying; there for leagues I saw 20  
her as she stood, raising at intervals one hand to  
heaven, amid the fiery crests of the pursuing waves  
and the raving of the storm; until at last, upon a  
sound from afar of malicious laughter and mockery,  
all was hidden forever in driving showers; and after- 25  
ward, but when I know not, nor how—

## III.

Sweet funeral bells from some incalculable distance,  
wailing over the dead that die before the dawn, awak-  
ened me as I slept in a boat moored to some familiar 30

shore. The morning twilight even then was breaking; and, by the dusky revelations which it spread, I saw a girl, adorned with a garland of white roses about her head for some great festival, running along the  
5 solitary strand in extremity of haste. Her running was the running of panic; and often she looked back as to some dreadful enemy in the rear. But when I leaped ashore, and followed on her steps to warn her her of a peril in front, alas! from me she fled as from  
10 another peril, and vainly I shouted to her of quicksands that lay ahead. Faster and faster she ran; round a promontory of rock she wheeled out of sight; in an instant I also wheeled round it, but only to see the treacherous sands gathering above her head.  
15 Already her person was buried; only the fair young head and the diadem of white roses around it were still visible to the pitying heavens; and, last of all, was visible one white marble arm. I saw by the early twilight this fair young head, as it was sinking down  
20 to darkness—saw this marble arm, as it rose above her head and her treacherous grave, tossing, faltering, rising, clutching, as at some false deceiving hand stretched out from the clouds—saw this marble arm uttering her dying hope, and then uttering her dying  
25 despair. The head, the diadem, the arm—these all had sunk; at last over these also the cruel quicksand had closed; and no memorial of the fair young girl remained on earth, except my own solitary tears, and the funeral bells from the desert  
30 seas, that, rising again more softly, sang a requiem over the grave of the buried child, and over her blighted dawn.

I sat, and wept in secret the tears that men have ever given to the memory of those that died before the dawn, and by treachery of earth, our mother. But suddenly the tears and funeral bells were hushed by a shout as of many nations, and by a roar as from some great king's artillery, advancing rapidly along the valleys, and heard afar by echoes from the mountains. "Hush!" I said, as I bent my ear earthward to listen—"hush! This either is the very anarchy of strife, or else"—and then I listened more profoundly, and whispered as I raised my head—"or else, oh Heavens! it is *victory* that is final, victory that swallows up all strife."

## IV.

Immediately, in trance, I was carried over land and sea to some distant kingdom, and placed upon a triumphal car, among companions crowned with laurel. The darkness of gathering midnight, brooding over all the land, hid from us the mighty crowds that were weaving restlessly about ourselves as a center; we heard them, but saw them not. Tidings had arrived, within an hour, of a grandeur that measured itself against centuries; too full of pathos they were, too full of joy, to utter themselves by other language than by tears, by restless anthems, and Te Deums reverberated from the choirs and orchestras of earth. These tidings we that sat upon the laureled car had it for our privilege to publish among all nations. And already, by signs audible through the darkness, by

snortings and tramlings, our angry horses, that knew no fear of fleshly weariness, upbraided us with delay. Wherefore *was* it that we delayed? We waited for a secret word, that should bear witness to the hope of 5 nations as now accomplished forever. At midnight the secret word arrived; which word was—*Waterloo and Recovered Christendom!* The dreadful word shone by its own light; before us it went; high above our leaders' heads it rode, and spread a golden light over 10 the paths which we traversed. Every city, at the presence of the secret word, threw open the gates. The rivers were conscious as we crossed. All the forests, as we ran along their margins, shivered in homage to the secret word. And the darkness com- 15 prehended it.

Two hours after midnight we approached a mighty Minster. Its gates, which rose to the clouds, were closed. But, when the dreadful word that rode before us reached them with its golden light, silently they 20 moved back upon their hinges; and at a flying gallop our equipage entered the grand aisle of the cathedral. Headlong was our pace; and at every altar, in the little chapels and oratories to the right hand and left of our course, the lamps, dying or sickening, kindled 25 anew in sympathy with the secret word that was flying past. Forty leagues we might have run in the cathedral, and as yet no strength of morning light had reached us, when before us we saw the ærial galleries of organ and choir. Every pinnacle of the fretwork, 30 every station of advantage among the traceries, was crested by white-robed choristers that sang deliverance; that wept no more tears, as once their fathers

had wept ; but at intervals that sang together to the generations, saying,

Chant the deliverer's praise in every tongue,  
and receiving answer from afar,

Such as once in heaven and earth were sung.

5

And of their chanting was no end ; of our headlong pace was neither pause nor slackening.

Thus, as we ran like torrents—thus, as we swept with bridal rapture over the Campo Santo\* of the cathedral graves—suddenly we became aware of a vast necropolis rising upon the far-off horizon—a city of sepulchers, built within the saintly cathedral for the warrior dead that rested from their feuds on earth. Of purple granite was the necropolis ; yet, in the first minute, it lay like a purple stain upon the horizon, so mighty was the distance. In the second minute it trembled through many changes, growing into terraces and towers of wondrous altitude, so mighty

\*“ *Campo Santo*.”—It is probable that most of my readers will be acquainted with the history of the Campo Santo (or cemetery) 20 at Pisa, composed of earth brought from Jerusalem from a bed of sanctity, as the highest prize which the noble piety of crusaders could ask or imagine. To readers who are unacquainted with England, or who (being English) are yet unacquainted with the cathedral cities of England, it may be right to mention that the graves within-side the cathedrals often form a flat pavement over 25 which carriages and horses *might* run ; and perhaps a boyish remembrance of one particular cathedral, across which I had seen passengers walk and burdens carried, as about two centuries back they were through the middle of St. Paul's in London, may have 30 assisted my dream.



was the pace. In the third minute already, with our dreadful gallop, we were entering its suburbs. Vast sarcophagi rose on every side, having towers and turrets that, upon the limits of the central aisle, strode forward with haughty intrusion, that ran back with mighty shadows into answering recesses. Every sarcophagus showed many bas-reliefs—bas-reliefs of battles and of battlefields; battles from forgotten ages, battles from yesterday; battlefields that, long since, nature had healed and reconciled to herself with the sweet oblivion of flowers; battlefields that were yet angry and crimson with carnage. Where the terraces ran, there did *we* run; where the towers curved, there did *we* curve. With the flight of swallows our horses swept round every angle. Like rivers in flood wheeling round headlands, like hurricanes that ride into the secrets of forests, faster than ever light unwove the mazes of darkness, our flying equipage carried earthly passions, kindled warrior instincts, among the dust that lay around us—dust oftentimes of our noble fathers that had slept in God from Crécy to Trafalgar. And now had we reached the last sarcophagus, now were we abreast of the last bas-relief, already had we recovered the arrow-like flight of the illimitable central aisle, when coming up this aisle to meet us we beheld afar off a female child, that rode in a carriage as frail as flowers. The mists which went before her hid the fawns that drew her, but could not hide the shells and tropic flowers with which she played—but could not hide the lovely smiles by which she uttered her trust in the mighty cathedral, and in the cherubim that looked

down upon her from the mighty shafts of its pillars. Face to face she was meeting us ; face to face she rode, as if danger there was none. " Oh, baby ! " I exclaimed, " shalt thou be the ransom for Waterloo ? Must we, that carry tidings of great joy to every 5 people, be messengers of ruin to thee ! " In horror I rose at the thought ; but then also, in horror at the thought, rose one that was sculptured on a bas-relief—a Dying Trumpeter. Solemnly from the field of battle he rose to his feet ; and, unslinging his stony 10 trumpet, carried it, in his dying anguish, to his stony lips—sounding once, and yet once again ; proclamation that, in *thy* ears, oh, baby ! spoke from the battlements of death. Immediately deep shadows fell between us, and aboriginal silence. The choir had 15 ceased to sing. The hoofs of our horses, the dreadful rattle of our harness, the groaning of our wheels, alarmed the graves no more. By horror the bas-relief had been unlocked unto life. By horror we, that were so full of life, we men and our horses, with their 20 fiery fore legs rising in mid air to their everlasting gallop, were frozen to a bas-relief. Then a third time the trumpet sounded ; the seals were taken off all pulses ; life, and the frenzy of life, tore into their channels again ; again the choir burst forth in sunny 25 grandeur, as from the muffling of storms and darkness ; again the thunderings of our horses carried temptation into the graves. One cry burst from our lips, as the clouds, drawing off from the aisle, showed it empty before us—" Whither has the infant fled ? 30 is the young child caught up to God ? " Lo ! afar off, in a vast recess, rose three mighty windows to the

clouds ; and on a level with their summits, a height insuperable to man, rose an altar of purest alabaster. On its eastern face was trembling a crimson glory. A glory was it from the reddening dawn that now  
5 streamed *through* the windows? Was it from the crimson robes of the martyrs painted *on* the windows? Was it from the bloody bas-reliefs of earth? There, suddenly, within that crimson radiance, rose the apparition of a woman's head, and then of a woman's  
10 figure. The child it was—grown up to woman's height. Clinging to the horns of the altar, voiceless she stood—sinking, rising, raving, despairing ; and behind the volume of incense that, night and day streamed upward from the altar, dimly was seen the  
15 fiery font, and the shadow of that dreadful being who should have baptized her with the baptism of death. But by her side was kneeling her better angel, that hid his face with wings ; that wept and pleaded for *her* ; that prayed when *she* could *not* ;  
20 that fought with Heaven by tears for *her* deliverance ; which also, as he raised his immortal countenance from his wings, I saw, by the glory in his eye, that from Heaven he had won at last.

## V.

25 Then was completed the passion of the mighty fugue. The golden tubes of the organ, which as yet had but muttered at intervals—gleaming among clouds and surges of incense—threw up, as from fountains unfathomable, columns of heart-shattering  
30 music. Choir and anti-choir were filling fast with

unknown voices. Thou also, Dying Trumpeter, with thy love that was victorious, and thy anguish that was finishing, didst enter the tumult ; trumpet and echo—farewell love, and farewell anguish—rang through the dreadful Sanctus. Oh, darkness of the grave ! that from the crimson altar and from the fiery font wert visited and searched by the effulgence in the angel's eye—were these indeed thy children ? Poms of life, that, from the burials of centuries, rose again to the voice of perfect joy, did ye indeed mingle with the<sup>10</sup> festivals of Death ? Lo ! as I looked back for seventy leagues through the mighty cathedral, I saw the quick and the dead that sang together to God, together that sang to the generations of man. All the hosts of jubilation, like armies that ride in pursuit, moved<sup>15</sup> with one step. Us, that, with laureled heads, were passing from the cathedral, they overtook, and, as with a garment, they wrapped us round with thunders greater than our own. As brothers we moved together ; to the dawn that advanced, to the stars that<sup>20</sup> fled ; rendering thanks to God in the highest—that, having hid his face through one generation behind thick clouds of War, once again was ascending, from the Campo Santo of Waterloo was ascending, in the visions of Peace ; rendering thanks for thee, young<sup>25</sup> girl ! whom having overshadowed with his ineffable passion of death, suddenly did God relent, suffered thy angel to turn aside his arm, and even in thee, sister unknown ! shown to me for a moment only to be hidden forever, found an occasion to glorify his<sup>30</sup> goodness. A thousand times, among the phantoms of sleep, have I seen thee entering the gates of the

golden dawn, with the secret word riding before thee,  
with the armies of the grave behind thee—seen thee  
sinking, rising, raving, despairing ; a thousand times  
in the worlds of sleep have seen thee followed by  
5 God's angel through storms, through desert seas,  
through the darkness of quicksands, through dreams  
and the dreadful revelations that are in dreams ;  
only that at the last, with one sling of his victorious  
arm, he might snatch thee back from ruin, and might  
10 emblazon in thy deliverance the endless resurrection  
of his love !

## AUTHOR'S POSTSCRIPT.

"THE ENGLISH MAIL COACH."—This little paper, according to my original intention, formed part of the "Suspiria de Profundis"; from which, for a momentary purpose, I did not scruple to detach it, and to 5 publish it apart, as sufficiently intelligible even when dislocated from its place in a larger whole. To my surprise, however, one or two critics, not carelessly in conversation, but deliberately in print, professed their inability to apprehend the meaning of the whole, or to 10 follow the links of the connection between its several parts. I am myself as little able to understand where the difficulty lies, or to detect any lurking obscurity, as these critics found themselves to unravel my logic. Possibly I may not be an indifferent and neutral judge 15 in such a case. I will therefore sketch a brief abstract of the little paper according to my original design, and then leave the reader to judge how far this design is kept in sight through the actual execution.

Thirty-seven years ago, or rather more, accident 20 made me, in the dead of night, and of a night memorably solemn, the solitary witness of an appalling scene, which threatened instant death in a shape the most terrific to two young people whom I had no means of assisting, except in so far as I was able to give them 25 a most hurried warning of their danger ; but even *that*

not until they stood within the very shadow of the catastrophe, being divided from the most frightful of deaths by scarcely more, if more at all, than seventy seconds.

- 5 Such was the scene, such in its outline, from which the whole of this paper radiates as a natural expansion. This scene is circumstantially narrated in Section the Second, entitled "The Vision of Sudden Death."
- 10 But a movement of horror, and of spontaneous recoil from this dreadful scene, naturally carried the whole of that scene, raised and idealized, into my dreams, and very soon into a rolling succession of dreams. The actual scene, as looked down upon
- 15 from the box of the mail, was transformed into a dream, as tumultuous and changing as a musical fugue. This troubled dream is circumstantially reported in Section the Third, entitled "Dream-Fugue on the theme of Sudden Death." What I had beheld
- 20 from my seat upon the mail—the scenical strife of action and passion, of anguish and fear, as I had there witnessed them moving in ghostly silence—this duel between life and death, narrowing itself to a point of such exquisite evanescence as the collision neared ; all
- 25 these elements of the scene blended, under the law of association, with the previous and permanent features of distinction investing the mail itself ; which features at that time lay—1st, in velocity unprecedented, 2d, in the power and beauty of the horses, 3d, in the official
- 30 connection with the government of a great nation, and, 4th, in the function, almost a consecrated function, of publishing and diffusing through the land

the great political events, and especially the great battles, during a conflict of unparalleled grandeur. These honorary distinctions are all described circumstantially in the First or introductory Section ("The Glory of Motion.") The three first were distinctions 5 maintained at all times ; but the fourth and grandest belonged exclusively to the war with Napoleon ; and this it was which most naturally introduced Waterloo into the dream. Waterloo, I understand, was the particular feature of the "Dream-Fugue" which my 10 censors were least able to account for. Yet surely Waterloo, which, in common with every other great battle, it had been our special privilege to publish over all the land, most naturally entered the dream under the license of our privilege. If not—if there 15 be anything amiss—let the Dream be responsible. The Dream is a law to itself ; and as well quarrel with a rainbow for showing, or for not showing, a secondary arch. So far as I know, every element in the shifting movements of the Dream derived itself 20 either primarily from the incidents of the actual scene, or from secondary features associated with the mail. For example, the cathedral aisle derived itself from the mimic combination of features which grouped themselves together at the point of approaching 25 collision—viz., an arrowlike section of the road, six hundred yards long, under the solemn lights described, with lofty trees meeting overhead in arches. The guard's horn, again,—a humble instrument in itself,—was yet glorified as the organ of publication for 30 so many great national events. And the incident of the Dying Trumpeter, who rises from a marble bas-re-



lief, and carries a marble trumpet to his marble lips for the purpose of warning the female infant, was doubtless secretly suggested by my own imperfect effort to seize the guard's horn and to blow a warning blast. But the Dream knows best; and the Dream, I say again, is the responsible party.

THE END.



## NOTES.

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THE text of both pieces here printed follows that of the latest Edinburgh edition. The footnotes are by De Quincey himself.

### JOAN OF ARC.

(Composed early in 1847; see p. 17: 14.)

THE literature on this much vexed question is already extensive and is still growing. See Larousse, *Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIXe siècle*, sub *Darc*, Jeanne. In imaginative literature the best known pieces are, for English: Southey's *Joan of Arc* and *Vision of the Maid of Orleans*; for German, Schiller's *Jungfrau von Orleans*; for French, Voltaire's *La Pucelle*. The Maid appears also in 1 *Henry VI.*; it is impossible to believe that Act I. scene 2, and Act V. scenes 3 and 4 are by Shakspeare. Of Southey, Schiller, and Voltaire it may be safely asserted, once for all, that their conception of the Maid is unworthy of themselves and of her; as treated by them, she is an historic and artistic impossibility. De Quincey is the first imaginative writer to portray the Maid in the true light. His article, published in *Tait's Magazine*, March and August, 1847, is a spontaneous effusion, inspired by perusal of Michelet's History. It begins with the abruptness of an epic poem. In the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, February 15, 1893, is an article by the Count G. de Contades, entitled *La Jeanne d'Arc de Thomas de Quincey*, which may be useful for introducing the English essayist to the French public, but which adds nothing to our knowledge. The Count has a low opinion of English humor: Englishmen, unfortunately, are "heavy in their badinage, rude and sometimes sinister in their jesting." Poor De Quincey!

No attempt is made in the present volume to give the real history of the Maid and her times; the subject is too difficult and complicated for anything but a special historical monograph. Only such explanations are given here as seemed necessary to make the ordinary reader feel the full significance of De Quincey's allusions.

2:5, *act.* Compare: *Im Anfang war die That, Faust*, 1237.—10. *Station of good will.* De Quincey seems to use station here in the surveyor's sense, "the place selected for planting the instrument with which an observation is to be made," *Cent. Dict.* 7a.—17, *scepter . . . Judah.* See *Gen.* xlix. 10.—23. *Vaucouleurs.* In view of the spelling Vaucouleur, adopted by Southey and others, it may not be amiss to state that the *s* is an organic part of the French form. The Latin is *oppidum de Vallecouloris*, see Quicherat, *Procès*, etc., i. 53 and *passim*.

3:7, *even yet may happen.* De Quincey believes that Joan may yet be exalted to the rank of a national heroine and perhaps even canonized. The first has been almost, if not quite, accomplished; as to the second, present indications all point that way. The character of Joan was vindicated centuries ago; by decree, July 7, 1456, of a papal commission under the presidency of the archbishop of Reims, the sentence pronounced and executed upon Joan was reversed and her memory exonerated from all taint of heresy.

4:9, *withier them.* Allusion to the Revolution of 1789, in consequence of which the *fleur de lis* ceased to be the national emblem.—25, *recovered liberty.* Allusion to the Revolution of July, 1830, which expelled the restored Bourbons. De Quincey is writing just before the Revolution of 1848, the mutterings of which were already audible.

5:5, *Michelet.* Born 1798, died 1874. See Larousse. In 1838 was appointed professor of history and ethics in the Collège de France. In his lectures, which were very popular, he attacked savagely the Jesuits. The substance of the lectures appeared in book form as follows: *Des Jésuites*, 1843; *Du Prêtre, de la Femme, et de la Famille*, 1844; *Du Peuple*, 1845. In 1847 he was suspended from lecturing, by order of the Orleanist govern-

ment. The revolutionary government of 1848 offered to restore him to his functions, but he declined the offer, preferring independent authorship. His *Histoire de France*, in six volumes, appeared 1835-1844. The part relating to Joan is in Vol. V., published 1841.—28, *Chevy Chase*. The early version of the lines here parodied runs in Bishop Percy's folio :

the stout Erle of Northumberland ,  
a vow to God did make,  
his pleasure in the Scottish woods  
3 sommers days to take.

See edition by Hales and Furnivall, II., p. 7.

6 : 30, *note*. Refers to Quicherat, *Procès de Condamnation et de Réhabilitation de Jeanne d'Arc*, 1841-49. Five volumes, complete and indexed.

7 : 18, *Delenda est*, etc. Imitated by De Quincey after the maxim of Cato the Elder : *Delenda est Carthago*, with which he is said to have concluded every speech of his in the Roman Senate.

8 : 1, *Suffren*. In the Boston edition of De Quincey the name is misspelled Suffrein. Pierre André de Suffren, 1726-88, was a conspicuous figure in the naval contest between France and England. His chief exploits were in the East Indies. According to Doniel, *Histoire de la Participation de la France à l'Établissement des États Unis*, IV. 558, note 1, Suffren was in De Grasse's fleet when it left Brest for Yorktown, 1781, but off the Azores was detached with five vessels on an expedition against the Cape of Good Hope. He was thus very nearly a participant in the siege that led to the surrender of Cornwallis.—7. *magnanimous*. The treatment of Joan in *Henry VI.* is anything but magnanimous.

12 : 24, *Papal interdicts*. De Quincey has probably in mind such an interdict as that pronounced in 1200, by Innocent III., against France. All ecclesiastical functions were suspended and the land was in desolation. See Hart, *German Universities*, p. 210.—24, *tragedies*, etc. The Emperor is Konradin, the last of the Hohenstaufen, beheaded by Charles of Anjou at Naples, 1268. The subsequent cruelties of Charles in Sicily caused

the popular uprising known as the Sicilian Vespers, 1282, in which many thousands of Frenchmen were assassinated.—28, *flight from earth*. The battle of Crécy, in which the English archers (yeomen or plebeians) were completely victorious over the French horsemen (knights and squires), is usually taken to be the beginning of the downfall of mediæval feudalism and its peculiar military system.

13 : 1, *double Pope*. The great "schism of the West," during which the rival Popes at Avignon and Rome fought each other with pen and sword, lasted about forty years. At one time, in fact, there were three claimants to the tiara. Peace was at last established in 1417, with the installation of Martin V. in the Vatican. See *Student's Gibbon*, ch. xxxix, §§ 18, 19.—5, *rents which no man should ever heal*, i. e., Lutheran or Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. De Quincey means that all the disturbances in the mediæval church were only a preparation for the final disruption effected by Luther.

15 : 15. The Vosges, in German *Vogesen*, were again the scene of terrible fighting in the Franco-German war of 1870.

16 : 13. De Quincey's memory is here at fault ; the remark is not made by Sir Roger but to him. In the paper called *Sir Roger at the Assizes*, at the end, Sir Roger asks his friend's opinion of a tavern sign, originally his (Sir Roger's) face, but now altered into a Saracen's head, whether it is more like him or the Saracen, to which the friend replies : "That much might be said on both sides."

17 : 10, *Bergereta*. Very late Latin, coined from the French *bergerette*, shepherdess.—20-30. The practice of yoking women with animals for field-work is still in vogue on the Continent. The flogging (of the women) is perhaps mythical.

18 : 19, *Friday*. The attendant of Robinson Crusoe.

19 : 1-5, *as-tu donné au cochon à manger*, Have you fed the pig ; *as-tu sauvé les fleurs-de-lys*, Have you saved the kingdom ; see 4 : 9, and note.

20 : 3, *Southey's Joan*. The poem was the very crude performance of Southey's youth. For a fuller statement of De Quincey's estimate of it, see his paper on Charles Lamb, new Edinburgh ed., V. 238-242.—21, *pricks for sheriff*. "The Lord Lieu-

tenant [of the county] prepares a list of persons qualified to serve, and returns three names. . . . The list is then sent to the sovereign, who, without looking at it, strikes a bodkin among the names, and he whose name is pierced is elected," *Cent. Dict.* De Quincey must be wrong in saying that the sovereign "pricks for two men out of three." There is only one sheriff for a county.—25, *Lady of the Orient*. The additional title Empress of India was assumed by Victoria in 1876; she was proclaimed such at Delhi, January 1, 1877.

21:15, *un peu fort*, going too far, coming it rather strong.—18-20, *dauphin . . . no crown*. At the death of Charles VI. (see p. 12:4) in 1422, his son was proclaimed his successor, as Charles VII. But the English declared him illegitimate and contested his claim, setting up the infant Henry VI. Being in possession of the greater part of Northern France, they prevented the consecration of Charles VII. at Reims, then regarded as an essential feature of the royal succession.

22:1, *the English boy*. At this time (1429) Henry VI. was only in his ninth year.—4, *ovens of Rheims*. The city is well known for its cake bakeries. But De Quincey seems to have in mind a French popular saying; it has not been traced.—18, Matthew Tindal, one of the English deists, 1656-1733. His *Christianity as Old as the Creation, or the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature*, was published 1730.—22, Joseph Cottle, bookseller and publisher of Bristol. A friend and admirer of Southey and Coleridge in their youth. He wrote also some poetry; but his best known work is his *Reminiscences of Coleridge and Southey*, 1847.

23:11-20, *Par. Reg.*, i. 196-205.—26, *France Delivered*. Imitated by De Quincey from the title of Tasso's poem, *Jerusalem Delivered*.

25:12, *excepting one man*. This is ambiguous. If De Quincey refers to Joan's first appearance before the Dauphin at Chinon (p. 20:10), her steadfast supporter was the Duc d'Alençon (*Michelet*, V. 63); if he refers to the march from Orleans to Patay, Troyes, and Reims, the president of the council, Maçon, seems to be the man (*Michelet*, V. 87). In popular accounts

Dunois, the Bastard, is her stanchest admirer. Schiller represents him in love with her. See *Jungfrau*, Act IV. scene 12.

27: 4, *Nolebat uti*, etc., she was loath to use her sword or slay anyone.

28: 15, *Bishop that art*, etc. De Quincey is here echoing the prophecy of the witches to Macbeth, Act I. scene 3, and Lady Macbeth's soliloquy, Act I. scene 5. For fuller account of Bishop of Beauvais see note to pp. 43-45.—18, *triple crown*, the pope's tiara.

29: 5. Criminal procedure in France is still open to the charges here brought against it. It may be said to act upon the theory that the accused must prove his innocence.—29. *Dominican*. The prosecution was conducted by two of this monastic order: Jean Le Maître, prior of the convent of St. James, in Rouen, and Jean Graverent, Grand Inquisitor of France. Which of the two De Quincey means is not clear. Nor will any one of the interrogatories in the full text of Quicherat, or in Michelet's summary, answer to De Quincey's "objection." Again his memory seems to have played him false.

32: 20. See *Ezekiel* xxxvii. 1-10.

33: 25, *daughter of Casars*. Marie Antoinette was the daughter of the German emperor, Francis I. The official title of the (old) empire was The Holy Roman Empire of Germany, resting upon the political fiction of a transfer of the empire from the ancient Romans to the Germans in the person of Charlemagne, and its transmission through his German successors, until its dissolution, in 1806, by Napoleon.

35: 24, *Judaic, Satanic*. English poetry, indeed English literature in general, from its frequent Old Testament allusions and sentiments, has been called Judaic by more than one Continental critic. The epithet *Satanic* was applied by Southey, in the preface to his *Vision of Judgment*, 1821, to the younger set of writers then prominent. No names were mentioned, but it was generally known that the thrust was aimed at Byron, Leigh Hunt, Shelley, etc.

36: 27. The question of the authorship of the *Imitation of Christ* is still in dispute.

38: 27, *burgoo*. A thick oatmeal gruel or porridge used chiefly



by seamen. The *Phil. Dict.* adds "derivation unknown." According to London *Athen.*, October 6, 1888, the word is a corruption of Arabic *burghul*, see Dozy, *Suppl. aux Dict. Arabes*, I. 73, 74.

39 : 4, *personal rancor*. De Quincey's estimate is not perfectly true. In the Neronian persecution certainly the Christians were treated as miserable outcasts, the personal enemies of the gods, the emperor, and the commonwealth. Nero tried to fasten upon them the responsibility for the burning of Rome.—13, *qui ne se rendent pas*. See note to p. 59 : 31.—34. Michelet's *History of France*, translated by Walter K. Kelly ; London, Chapman & Hall ; 2 vols., 1844-46.

42 : 13, *rise from the dead*. See *Luke*, xvi. 31.

42 : 15, 44 : 14 (see also p. 28 : 15). Pierre Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais and Rector of the University of Paris. Appropriately called by Quicherat *l'âme damnée des princes de Lancastre*. Made bishop of Beauvais in 1420. Expelled from his bishopric in 1429, by the people, as a traitor, he followed the fortunes of the English party, with the promise from them of being made Archbishop of Reims. But the promise was never kept. When Joan was captured at Compiègne, he claimed jurisdiction over her, that town being in the Beauvais diocese. As presiding judge he resorted to every means, however infamous, for securing her condemnation. After his death, 1442 or 1443, the people dug up his remains and threw them in the public sewer. De Quincey represents him as dying in bed, 42 : 15, haunted with the vision of his victim. This is not historical. According to Quicherat, iii. 165, he died suddenly while getting shaved : "mortuus est subito, faciendo fieri barbam suam."—25, *English Prince, Regent*. John, Duke of Bedford, brother of Henry V., and leader of the English interests in France.—26, *Lord of Winchester*. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, half-brother of Henry IV. Made cardinal in 1426. The most active and influential English prelate of his day. Member of the court that tried Joan. For the story that he "died and made no sign" see 2 *Henry VI.*, Act III. scene 3, end. It is in the old chronicles, but is not supported by contemporary evidence.

45 : 16, see *Isaiah* lxiii. 1. Exactly what De Quincey means

by "bloody coronation robes from Rheims" is not as clear as one might wish. There seems to be a *tacit assumption* on the part of all modern writers that Joan appeared in armor at the consecration of Charles VII. at Reims; if she did, this armor may very well have been stained with blood, for there was hard fighting at the capture of Troyes, only a week before. But there is no contemporary mention of Joan's habiliments at the consecration; the only point certain is that during the ceremony she held her famous standard. At her execution at Rouen she was dressed in female attire, *Michelet*, V. 167.

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### THE ENGLISH MAIL COACH.

(In revising the original *Blackwood* articles for the Edinburgh edition, 1854, the author made many changes. For a full account of them the reader must consult the new Masson edition, XIII. 270-330. The present text follows Professor Masson's, omitting, however, his notes).

#### 1. *Glory of Motion.*

46: 20. Professor Masson corrects this statement. Lady Madelina Gordon, daughter of the Duke of Gordon, was first married to Sir Robert Sinclair, subsequently to Mr. Charles Palmer, not to Mr. John Palmer of mail-coach renown.—24. The *inventio sanctæ crucis*, or finding by the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, of the true cross in Jerusalem upon which Christ suffered, is a celebrated church legend. See Smith, *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, I. 504. The calendar day for the Western Church is now May 3.

48: 20. De Quincey's language is, to say the least, provoking. If by *college* he means *dormitory* or the like, the universities of the Continent, and also of Scotland, have *none*. In fact "college," in the Anglo-American sense, is scarcely known save in England proper and America.—26. According to the *Cent. Dict.*, sub *Terms*, the four periods of the college year at Oxford are now Michaelmas, Hilary, Easter, and Trinity. De Quincey seems to

use Lent=Hilary. Trinity was formerly called Act, because of the act or thesis submitted for a degree; see *Phil. Dict.* sub *Act*, 8.

49: 32, *Pariaks*. A favorite word with De Quincey from childhood; see Masson, *Life*, ch. i.

50: 32. In full: *de non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est lex*.

51: 29. In the strikes of those days the workmen who accepted lower wages were called *snobs*; those who held out for higher, *nobs*.

52: 12, *attics*, *garrets*. This use of plural form with singular meaning is not common in England. At least no example is given in *Phil. Dict.*, sub *attic*, nor in *Cent. Dict.*, sub *garret*. It is heard occasionally in the United States.—18, *Great wits jump*. Probably used in the Shakspearean sense of "agree, coincide," e. g., "both our inventions meet and jump in one," *Taming of Shrew*, Act I. scene 1, 195; "they jump not on a just account," *Othello*, Act I. scene 3, 5, i. e., the reports of the Turkish fleet do not agree in the number of ships.—19. The point of the irony lies in the circumstance that one of the names for China is *Tien Chan*, Heavenly Dynasty, usually translated Celestial Empire.

53: 9, *first lord of the treasury*. In England, the Prime Minister. De Quincey's application of the title to Chinese affairs is burlesque.—27, *jury-reins*. Coined by De Quincey in imitation of *jury-mast*, a temporary mast, in place of the regular mast that has been carried away or broken. According to Skeat's letter of March 8, 1884 (in London *Academy*) *jury* is for *ajury*, from Anglo-French *ajuer*=Latin *adjuvare* "to aid." A *jury-mast* is thus an aid-mast, an adjutory mast.

54: 8, *ça ira*. The burden of a French song extremely popular in the Revolution of 1789. According to Larousse, *Grand Dict.*, etc., it originated probably in 1790, author unknown, and was at first merely a popular theme and air expressive of hope and exultation in the new freedom. Later, in the struggle between the Jacobins and the adherents of royalty, it was accentuated by the terrible refrain: *Les aristocrates à la lanterne! Les aristocrates on les pendra!*

55: 18, *noters*. Since *noters* and *protesters* are coupled together as persons who make the debtor's life miserable, the word cannot

mean the *maker* of a promissory note. Can it be for *noterer*, an archaic form of *notary*?

56:4, *parliamentary rat.* Epithet applied to one who goes over to the other party.

57:16, *Æneid*, ii, 312.

58:15, *quarterings.* See 99:15, *note*.—21, *benefit of clergy.* "Originally the privilege of exemption from trial by a secular court, allowed to, or claimed by, clergymen arraigned for felony; in later times the privilege of exemption from the sentence, which, in the case of certain offenses, might be pleaded on his first conviction, by everyone who could read. Abolished . . . in 1827. The ability to read, being originally merely the *test* of the 'clergy,' or clerical position, came at length to be in itself the *ground* of the privilege." *Phil. Dict.*, sub *clergy*, 6. As a term of ordinary literature, a felony "without benefit of clergy" means practically a criminal charge for which the offender must stand his trial, and—if convicted—his punishment.

59:31. The legendary answer made by Cambronne, commander of the Old Guard, when summoned to surrender. The *real* answer is given by Victor Hugo in *Les Misérables*. The legend of the *Vengeur* is that the crew refused to surrender in the fight off Ushant, June 1, 1794, and fired a last broadside, sinking with the shout, *Vive la République*. In fact the ship sank while the crew were crying for help.

60:23. See "false, fleeting, perjured Clarence," *Richard III.*, Act I. scene 4, 55.

61:13. See "Besides the King's name is a tower of strength, Which they upon the adverse party want," *Richard III.*, Act V. scene 3, 12.

62:8, *omrahs.* An Anglo-Indian term, from Arabic *omara*, pl. of *amir* (ameer), a Mohammedan court-grandee. The *h* is a clumsy attempt to represent the long *a* vowel; while the *s* is the addition of an English plural sign to a word that is already plural, like *banditties* for Ital. *banditi*, pl. of *bandito*.—31, *Roman Pearl* "An imitation pearl made of a ball of alabaster or similar mineral substance, upon which is spread pure white wax, which in its turn is coated with oriental-pearl essence," *Cent. Dict.*, sub *pearl*, 14.

63 : 1. De Quincey is making fun of the Welsh obtuseness to a joke. Coaches in Plantagenet England were as unknown as snakes in Iceland, 56 : 3. Also making fun of the reader, who is not supposed to know that the Statute 6 Edward I. has only fifteen chapters !

64 : 12, *Nile, i. e.*, the battle of the Nile (or Bay of Aboukir), Nelson's victory, August 1, 1798.—28, *Pot-walloping*. "The sound made by a pot in boiling," *Cent. Dict.*

66 : 14. For the slaying of the wooers of Penelope see *Odyssey*, xxii.

67 : 14. See "But all our praises why should lords engross, Rise, honest Muse ! and sing the Man of Ross," Pope, *Epistle on Use of Riches*, 249.

68 : 26, *Turrets*. De Quincey probably has in mind the "torets fyled rounde" of the *Knight's Tale*, 1294. If the word is indeed the same, it has changed its meaning. The Chaucerian term is applied to a dog's collar, not to the trappings of a horse, and means an eye in which a ring will turn round. In Elizabethan English it meant an amulet or little ring by which a hawk's lure was fastened to the jesses. Skeat's note on *Knight's Tale*, 1294.

69 : 32, *Sindbad* (Es Sindibád). See *The Thousand and One Nights*, translated by E. W. Lane. 3 Vols., London ; 1865. Vol. III. ch. xx. The "old scoundrel" is the Old Man of the Sea, who rides Sindbad nearly to death. At last Sindbad makes him drunk with wine, the Old Man falls off to the ground, and Sindbad breaks his skull with a stone.

71 : 24, *down from London*. Englishmen invariably speak of the direction away from London as going *down* into the country ; the reverse is going *up* to London.

73 : 17, *attelage*, team of horses.

75 : 30, *American writer*. The name is not ascertainable, apparently. It is quite possible that the writer in question may have indulged in some harmless ridicule of English brag, and that De Quincey has taken him too seriously.

76 : 26, *Columbian standards*. Perhaps a covert sneer, implying that America is not much more civilized now than when discovered by Columbus.

80: 7, *fey*. De Quincey: 'plies that the word is Celtic. This is not correct; it is a genuine English word, Anglo-Saxon *fage*, doomed, fated.

## 2. The Vision of Sudden Death.

Bearing in mind De Quincey's mention of laudanum, 90: 28, one is tempted to speculate upon the ratio of fact to fiction in the following narrative. The incident is of course possible. But it would be hard to draw a clear dividing line between this Vision and the Dream-Fugue.

85: 29, *βιαθάνατος*. De Quincey has evidently taken this from John Donne's treatise: ΒΙΑΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ, *A Declaration of that Paradoxe or Thesis, That Self-homicide is not so naturally Sin, that it may never be otherwise*, 1644. See his paper on *Suicide*, etc., Masson's ed. VIII. 398. But not even Donne's precedent justifies the word-formation. The only acknowledged compounds are *βιαυθάνασια*, "violent death," and *βιαυθάνατος*, "dying a violent death." Even *βία θάνατος*, "death by violence," is not classical.

88: 21, *Nature . . sighing, Paradise Lost*, IX. 782.

89: 14, *down mail*. See p. 71: 24 note.—28. The date suggested by 89: 6 is vague; the summer in question may be 1817 or 1818. De Quincey was married in the end of 1816.

90: 28, *laudanum*. De Quincey was at his worst from the middle of 1817 to the middle of 1819; see Masson's *Life*, ch. vi.—30, *beyond London, i. e.*, to the south of London. Which one of De Quincey's numerous southern flittings is here meant is hardly possible now to determine.

91: 7. See *Æneid*, III. 658. The monster is Polyphemus.—12, *Calender*. "Also *Kalender*. Persian *qalandar*, of unknown origin. One of a mendicant order of dervishes in Turkey and Persia," *Phil. Dict.* For the story of the Three Calenders (mendicants), with shaven chins, each blind of the left eye, see Lane, *The Thousand and One Nights*, I. ch. 3, and note 24.—21, *Al Sirat*, "the bridge over which all must pass on the day of judgment, extending over the midst of Hell, finer than a hair and sharper than a sword," Lane, *The Thousand and One Nights*, II., ch. 15, note 41. The tradition is not in the Koran.—27, 28. After the phrase "too elegant to be pedantic," the

original article in *Blackwood* added. "And also take this remark from me as a *gage d'amitié*—that no word ever was or *can* be pedantic which, by supporting a distinction, supports the accuracy of logic, or which fills up a chasm for the understanding." See *Introduction*, p. xxiii.

94 : 30, *seven atmospheres of sleep*. De Quincey is indulging in jocular arithmetic. The three nights plus the three days, 94 : 14, plus the present night equal seven.

99 : 2, 6. De Quincey, it will be observed, speaks of the right side of the road as the wrong. In England the law is to drive to the *left*.—15, *quartering*. Used also 58 : 15.

100 : 20, *taxed cart*. Now usually *tax-cart*. A little spring-cart. "Vehicles not over the value of £21, formerly termed taxed carts, and, since their exemption from tax, usually called in the provinces tax-carts," *Cent. Dict.* Not the heavy American cart, for hauling earth, etc., but a light open two-wheeled vehicle for driving, similar to the present dog-cart.

102 : 4, *shout of Achilles*. See *Iliad*, XVIII, 228 [Achilles is standing on the wall of the Greek camp]: "Thrice great Achilles spake, And thrice (in heat of all the charge) the Trojans started back. Twelve men, of greatest strength in Troy, left with their lives exhaled. Their chariots and their darts, to death with his three summons called." Chapman's translation.

103 : 13, *shilling a day*, i. e., the pay of a private soldier.

### 3. *Dream-Fugue*.

107 : 15, *Par. Lost*, IX. 558-563.—21, *woman's Ionic form*. An allusion to the old story of the origin of the styles of Greek architecture, as told by Vitruvius, IV. ch. 1: "They measured a man's foot, and finding its length the sixth part of his height, they gave the column a similar proportion, that is, they made its height six times the thickness of the shaft measured at the base. Thus the Doric order obtained its proportion, its strength, and its beauty, from the human figure. With a similar feeling they afterward built the temple of Diana. But in that, seeking a new proportion, they used the female figure as a standard; and for the purpose of producing a more lofty effect, they first made it eight times its thickness in height. Under it they placed a base, after

the manner of a shoe to the foot ; they also added volutes to its capital, like graceful curling hair hanging on each side, and the front they ornamented with *cymatia* and festoons in the place of hair. On the shafts they sunk channels, which bear a resemblance to the folds of a matronal garment. Thus two orders were invented, one of a masculine character, without ornament, the other bearing a character which resembled the delicacy, ornament, and proportion of a female. The successors of these people, improving in taste, and preferring a more slender proportion, assigned seven diameters to the height of the Doric column, and eight and a half to the Ionic." Gwilt's translation.

II3:14. "And the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not." *John* i. 5.—30, *station of advantage*. Compare "coign of vantage," *Macbeth*, Act I. scene 6, 7. De Quincey probably uses *advantage* here in an obsolete sense—rising ground, commanding position. See *Phil. Dict.*, *advantage*, 3.

#### AUTHOR'S POSTSCRIPT.


This is the heading introduced by Professor Masson, who says: "What is now printed properly as a 'Postscript' was printed by De Quincey himself as a portion of the Preface which he prefixed in 1854 to the volume of his Collected Writings containing *The English Mail Coach*." In the Edinburgh ed. of 1862 it is found pp. xii-xiv of Vol. VI.











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